

Channel tunnel project given double boost

Government gave qualified approval to the tunnel project yesterday, but not to the use of public money for its construction. Instead, a consortium which includes British Rail, the British construction company, and the French construction company, is to finance and build the tunnel.

Government approval and private backing

Channel tunnel project given a double boost yesterday when Mr Norman Fowler, Secretary of Transport, gave it qualified approval, though without taxpayers' money, and a consortium offered to build it at a low price of £540m. Mr Commons stated that the government would give no commitment to the tunnel at this stage, saying it must await "suitable circumstances" between the British and French governments. But he told MPs that the government would "speculatively" support the project, which would attract private capital.

Mr Fowler said that the project was a "suitable" use of public money, but that the government would not fund it. He said that the project was a "suitable" use of public money, but that the government would not fund it. He said that the project was a "suitable" use of public money, but that the government would not fund it. He said that the project was a "suitable" use of public money, but that the government would not fund it.

It is expensive because any connection with the tunnel is bound to be expensive.



Weather worsens: Continuous snowfall and high winds brought blizzards to much of the North and North-west yesterday, conditions which were not enjoyed by Stalin, a camel with Hoffmann's Circus, when he was exercised by Mr Jim Conway, the circus animals manager.

Two vehicles were blown over on the M62 Pennine route between Rochdale and Oldham and the eastbound carriageway was blocked for two hours. The Forth road bridge and the Severn bridge were closed to high-sided vehicles. Speed restrictions were in force on all motorways in northern England and Scotland.

There were 4ft snowdrifts on the A57 Snake Pass in Derbyshire and heavy snowfalls hindered motorists in Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, and the Cotswolds. North and Mid-Wales were also badly affected. Huge waves crashed over the sea wall at Rhos-on-Sea, near Colwyn Bay, and flooded the main street. A gale in the Thames Estuary caused a yacht to run aground on the east end of Canvey Island. The crew of two scrambled ashore.

Britain may test Community law by withholding VAT payments

By Fred Emery
Political Editor

Government orchestration of Mrs Thatcher's new EEC theme that she is ready for a crisis over Britain's £1,100m contribution, while not seeking one, continued apace yesterday in Whitehall.

With the Brussels EEC summit only 11 days away, it was authoritatively confirmed that last Monday, the day before she had told the Commons that she would not withhold VAT payments, Mrs Thatcher had been advised by Mr Roy Jenkins, President of the EEC Commission, that making threats would not advance Britain's case with her partners. But her Commons answer was not taken in Whitehall to be a threat, which is how it was received in Brussels. After all, Mrs Thatcher immediately added: "I hope that it will not come to that."

Yesterday Mrs Thatcher followed up her interview on French television by talking to the Hamburg daily Die Welt. "If there is a crisis it will not be caused by us but by those who expect the largest contribution from us," she said according to a Foreign Office translation circulated at Westminster. "We shall do our utmost to prevent matters coming to a crisis but it must be realised that things cannot continue like this."

Average pay rises approach 20 per cent

By David Blake
Economics Editor

Pay is rising faster than at any time in the past four years, according to new figures published by the Department of Employment. The underlying rate of increase in earnings is estimated to have come near to 20 per cent a year in January, the fourth successive month in which the underlying rate is thought to have accelerated.

Carter move to revive Palestinian talks

From Dacib Cross
Washington, March 19

President Carter is to meet separately President Sadat of Egypt and Mr Menachem Begin, the Israeli Prime Minister, in Washington next month in a fresh effort to inject momentum into the deadlocked Palestinian autonomy talks.



Dr Eliahu ben-Elissar: Attacked by Cairo newspaper. Israel envoy snubbed in Cairo

From Christopher Walker
Jerusalem, March 19

Less than a month after the exchange of ambassadors between Israel and Egypt, the brave attempt to normalize diplomatic relations between the two of the most bitter former enemies in the Middle East is running into difficulties. The result has been to anger many Israeli politicians. Although nothing has yet been stated formally, it has emerged that Dr Eliahu ben-Elissar, the first Israeli Ambassador to Egypt and his staff have been subjected to a virtual social boycott. A number of important functions have been snubbed by the refusal of any prominent Egyptian guests to attend with the Israelis.

Record interest rates to stay

High interest rates are likely to stay for months until inflation begins to slow according to Mr Gordon Richardson, Governor of the Bank of England. The Governor said that high interest rates and a tight monetary policy would lead to lower living standards for a while. The Bank forecast a drop in output of at least 2 per cent.

1,000 die 'because kidney treatment not available'

An estimated 1,000 kidney patients in Britain died last year because treatment was not available, a doctor said. From being a pioneer in the 1960s, Britain had fallen behind at least 11 other European countries in providing dialysis or transplants because of a shortage of trained staff. The doctor also said Britain is less inclined to treat patients aged over 45 compared with other European countries.

Carter-Reagan wins in Illinois primary

From Patrick Brogan
Chicago, March 19

President Carter and Mr Ronald Reagan won clear victories over their opponents in the Illinois presidential primaries yesterday, and in each case the victory was so sweeping that it may prove decisive. Mr Carter defeated Senator Edward Kennedy by more than 48 per cent of the Republican vote, against 37 per cent for Mr John Anderson.

Germs accident denial

Moscow has dismissed as slander Washington suggestions that an accident involving germ warfare material has claimed many lives in the Soviet city of Sverdlovsk, which is closed to foreigners. According to Tass news agency, this was an American manoeuvre intended to conceal the Pentagon's own production of new chemical weapons.

President Tito 'very grave'

Ljubljana, March 19.—President Tito's doctors reported a reduction in his heavy internal bleeding today. The general health of the 87-year-old Yugoslav leader remained "very grave". He was continuing to receive intensive medical treatment.—Reuters.

Nestly for Rhodesia

Immigrants, the Governor, is to sign a new order for Rhodesia, which is expected to take effect in a few days. British advisers on broad military training, administration and intelligence training are arriving in Salisbury this week.

Fighting Forest win

Nottingham Forest, the European Cup holders, beat Dynamo Berlin of East Germany 3-1 to reach the semi-final round of the competition. Forest won 3-2 on aggregate, having lost the first leg at home. Celtic were eliminated after losing 3-0 to Real Madrid.

Hands coal find

National Coal Board has found coal seams thick in a new coalfield in central Wales which could be two thirds of the size of the Vale of Belvoir. It is estimated 150 million tonnes of coal could be recovered.

Computers cost 88p each

spend 88p a member annually on strike to £9.72 on administration, according to a survey by the TUC. The 91 unions surveyed had a combined membership of 659, a total income of £167,222,456, and options averaging £12.68 a member.

Steel union leaders to seek talks with BSC after adopting 'firm policy'

By Paul Routledge
Labour Editor

Steel union leaders last night decided to seek fresh talks with the British Steel Corporation "within a period of days" on yet another united policy front. Talks on ways out of the national strike, now in its twelfth week, went on for more than two hours among members of the 13-union coordinating committee.

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Books

On Channel tunnel, by Patrick Stobart and Mr. T. J. O'Connell; on human rights, by Mr. Paul Sieghart; a Whistler collection at the University, from Professor Michael Fry; articles: EEC payments; conspires; Iran elections.

TV & Radio

11 Engagements, 20 Parliament, 26-32 Features, 14, 15 Sale Room, 20 Theatres, etc, 20 Law Report, 9 Science, 20 25 Years Ago, 20 Letters, 15, 28 Snow reports, 12 Weather, 34 Obituary, 28 Sport, pages 12, 13

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HOME NEWS

Unions spend an average of 88p a member annually on strikers' pay and £9.72 on administration

By Paul Routledge
Labour Editor

Unions spend 88p a member a year on strike pay out of a total income of more than £167m, according to a private TUC survey of the labour movement's income and expenditure.

The internal report, which came before the TUC employment policy and organization committee yesterday, is based on figures gathered at the end of last year but relating to 1978; both figures are certain to have risen since then.

Expenditure on disputes, which totalled just over £9m by the 91 unions taking part in the survey, compared with rather more than £115m spent on administration, an average of £9.72 a member.

The figures are likely to fuel the debate on union expenditure to support their members who go on strike. The Government plans to introduce legislation in the summer "dealing" for the purpose of social security regulations that strikers are paid £12 a week from union funds.

According to the confidential report, considered yesterday, fewer than half of the unions that pay dispute benefit specify in their rules the amount it

should be. For those that do, the average is £8.40 a week.

Leaders of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, whose national strike is now in its twelfth week without dispute benefit, have been saying in private that the only way to combat the Government's plans would be to increase subscriptions substantially so as to build up big strike funds to finance any future industrial action.

The 91 affiliated unions which took part had a combined membership of 11,888,659 (98 per cent of total affiliated membership). Total income was £167,222,456, an increase of 17.6 per cent over 1977. Income from subscriptions was £150,865,883, or £12.68 a member, and that source provided 90.2 per cent of total income.

The average weekly income from subscriptions was 24.4p, and it is calculated that it takes the average worker 7.9 minutes to earn his weekly subscription. Trade union income investments totalled £13,160,512, or 7.9 per cent of the total. The rest came from miscellaneous sources, including the sale of ties and diaries.

Total spending on benefits and administration was £139,740,891 or £11.83 a member, an increase of more than 24 per cent on the previous year. Of this, £115,504,513 went on administration: salaries, employees' superannuation, rents, rates, lighting, heating, insurance and office, legal, committee and conference expenses.

In the section on dispute benefit, the survey says: "Seventy-two unions, covering 11,032,907 members, had provision for dispute benefit. Of those, 31, with a total of 7,575,137 members, specified in their rules the level of dispute benefit payable. The average amount payable was £8.40 a week.

"Nine unions with a total of 1,114,999 members paid an amount equivalent to the net take-home pay of the members in dispute. The remaining 22 unions, with a membership of 2,342,771, left the determination of the level of benefit to their executive committees.

"In 1978, 45 unions with 10,378,426 members had expenditure on dispute benefit to a total of £9,023,276 or 88p a member. This represents an increase in expenditure on dispute benefit of 118.5 per cent, and in expenditure per member of 100 per cent (from 44p) compared with 1977."

More tax men 'would save £500m'

By Our Labour Staff

Five Civil Service unions yesterday launched a campaign to persuade the Government that it should be recruiting more tax inspectors rather than employing 1,000 extra staff to stamp out social security fraud.

They claimed that while frauds were costing £50m a year, the cost of evasion of income tax and VAT was between £5,000m and £11,000m a year.

Mr Gerry Gillman, general secretary of the Society of Civil and Public Servants, said: "It may be that the Government is paying its political debts, but I think what it is doing is morally reprehensible."

The unions believe that the employment of an extra 1,000 income tax inspectors and 1,000 VAT inspectors would yield at least £500m.

Mr Anthony Christopher, general secretary of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation, said: "Between £1,000m and £3,000m of tax is not collected each year. The lower figure is precisely the figure that Mrs Thatcher is trying to recover from the EEC."

If that money could be collected it would be sufficient to allow for a cut of 5p in the pound in the basic rate of income tax.

Dublin kidnap trial next month

The trial of three Northern Irishmen who have been charged over the kidnapping of Mrs Anne Sullivan, bank manager's wife, and family, is to start on April 15, the Special Criminal Court in Dublin decided yesterday.

John O'Doherty, aged 34, and Henry Doherty, aged 21, were remanded in custody yesterday but Vincent Fegan, aged 24, had his bail continued.

Britain 'is facing an industrial killer'

By Peter Hill and Ronald Kershaw

Britain was facing an "industrial killer", consisting of a dreadful rate of inflation and a petro-currency of unnatural strength, which was threatening not only the British Steel Corporation, BSC, but other industries too, Sir Charles Villiers, chairman of BSC, said yesterday.

"We cannot go on being screwed by this combination of a petro-currency with inflation, which is crippling our heavy industries into the ground. Industrial survival is at stake."

Speaking to the Federation of British Cutlery Manufacturers in Sheffield, he said that the most beneficial for British industry would be for sterling to fall to a substantially lower level against other main currencies.

But that should not divert industry from its main task of increasing efficiency, productivity and added value to match the world of the 1980s.

European and Japanese com-

petition posed the biggest threat to the BSC was losing heavily from the over-valuation of sterling, since it could not recover costs increased by inflation because of imports that received a "price shelter" from the strong pound. The volume of exports fell as costs rose with inflation and the sterling value of exports was held down by the strong pound.

It was important to compensate for the petro-currency of sterling with the maintenance of the principles of free trade. During his visit to Sheffield, Sir Charles agreed that the corporation had been approached by private sector interests with a view to investment in BSC activities. He said that Guest Keen and Neithelands and BSC had had discussions about a partnership in the bar division of the corporation and there had been other approaches. He declined to identify the companies and divisions other than to say that there had been no inquiries in Yorkshire and Humberside.

Mr Sidney Plant, the union's Midlands district organizer, said yesterday that the union would not make any demands, including telephonists and computer staff if they would strike if necessary. He claimed that there could be a serious impact on local council elections in May if the dispute went ahead.

Firm stand by provincial papers on pay

Provincial newspaper and general printing employers' organizations stood firm yesterday in the face of threatened industrial action over pay by the National Graphical Association.

The council of the British Printing Industries Federation also decided to set up a "major fund" to support members. It said that 16 of the largest printing groups in the United Kingdom had unanimously agreed to reject any NGA demands made on their individual companies.

The NGA has rejected an offer of a minimum earnings of £75 a week and a 37-hour week by July 1982.

Expansion of Windscale plant approved

An expansion of the Windscale nuclear complex in Cumbria was approved yesterday. A further 137 acres of land on the West Cumbrian coast may become part of the complex, but planners have insisted that a Magnox reprocessing plant planned by British Nuclear Fuels must be contained within a 25-acre area.

The county council's economic planning committee imposed a series of conditions on the approval, which now goes to the county council for a decision.

Cleethorpes will get rate bills on time

By Donald Macintyre

Ratepayers in Cleethorpes, Humberside, could be among a select few in Britain to receive their rate demands on time if the dispute between town halls and their white-collar staff is prolonged.

Cleethorpes Borough Council yesterday became the first of the 456 councils in England and Wales to announce that it had reached agreement with the National and Local Government Officers' Association.

National negotiators on both sides were surprised by the settlement reached by the council and its 170 white-collar staff.

Under the interim settlement, which Nalga said would provide for comparability payments of between 10 and 15 per cent, compared with the average 8 per cent on offer nationally, the union has agreed not to take disruptive action in the borough.

While the union greeted the move as a fresh indication that local authority employers were "disarrayed", officials involved in national negotiations on the management side lost no time in publicly decrying the significance of Cleethorpes, given its size. It has a population of 70,000.

Politics played little part in the council's decision. Labour has the most members, but it has far from a controlling interest.

Mr Ronald Farmer, the chief executive, said last night: "The settlement is a major step forward for the council and its ratepayers and residents."

The settlement avoided incurring the extra costs that would have been caused by disruptive action. Nalga said on its members to operate a wide range of sanctions in addition to refusing to process rate demands.

Meanwhile, the results of the ballot of Nalga staff at nine municipal airports, including the charter flight centre of Luton on a four-day strike call are not expected until early next week.

By Easter holiday flights from the affected airports would almost certainly be grounded for four days if the staff voted in favour of the strike.

Mr Sidney Plant, the union's Midlands district organizer, said yesterday that the union would not make any demands, including telephonists and computer staff if they would strike if necessary. He claimed that there could be a serious impact on local council elections in May if the dispute went ahead.

Trust taking over restoration work on canal

From Our Correspondent

Welshpool

A trust is to be set up to take over restoration of the Shropshire Union Canal from the Prince of Wales committee which has sponsored restoration on a section near Welshpool.

The Shropshire, Chester and North Wales branch of the Inland Waterways Association said yesterday that plans were well in hand for setting up the trust. Mr Michael Lyabery, the branch chairman, said the trust would coordinate the work of the various groups involved.

Warning of further tragedies if fire precautions are not improved

Seven escape in second London hostel blaze

By Nicholas Timmins

Voluntary organizations and MPs voiced fears yesterday that further tragedies may follow the blaze of nine women in a hostel for the homeless and destitute in Kilburn, north London, on Tuesday unless fire precautions in such hostels are improved.

Early yesterday fire, swept through another London hostel. Six men and the hostel's woman warden escaped serious injury in the blaze.

The blaze broke out in a hostel for sub-acute alcoholics which is run by the Methodist Church.

Firemen used ladders to rescue five men from first and second-floor windows of the dilapidated, four-storey building, in Commercial Road, north London.

Firemen used ladders to rescue five men from first and second-floor windows of the dilapidated, four-storey building, in Commercial Road, north London.

Mr George Tremlett, director of the National Association of

Voluntary Hostels, said yesterday: "There are a considerable number of other hostels that run the risk of a similar fire to that in Kilburn. The fire could easily run to a second floor."

The number of hostels in Britain is not known, as most local authorities do not require them to register. But Mr Tremlett said his association knew of 518 in London and 500 outside.

"There is a massive backlog of work to be done on fire precautions," he said. "Many of the hostels are old, large family houses that were in single occupation, and fire precautions are extremely expensive. It could cost £20,000 or more to install basic precautions such as enclosed stairways, fireproof doors and fire escapes in a hostel to house 20 or 30 people."

Mr Joseph Dean, Labour MP for Leeds West, is to table amendments to the Government's Housing Bill which would place a duty on local authorities to register hostels and provide grants for fire precautions, on a sliding scale to match the grant to the amount of work needed.

His private member's Bill to make such changes ran out of time in the face of government opposition last November. But he said yesterday that he hoped there would be a change of heart in the Government. He said that as Kilburn would happen again if nothing was done.

A report from the Department of Health and Social Security, Hostels and Lodgings for Single People, said four years ago that "the risk of a tragic accident involving serious loss of life is very great."

That report recommended that hostels and lodging houses should be brought within the Fire Precautions Act, 1971, which lays down fire safety standards for hotels and guest houses. But the Home Office said yesterday that while consideration of "being given to bringing hostels and old people's homes within the Act, there are no proposals to include hostels."

Mr Paddy Coulter, of the Campaign for Single Homeless People, said yesterday that since the 1976 report there have been at least 21 fires in hostels and houses that we know as "an absolute certainty there are going to be tragedies like this unless it is taken."

The law relating to involving the housing of the Public Health was a "quagmire" to the Government's Bill does provide for a £500 towards fire prevention where a local authority their installation. But he said the figure was "nuts" compared to the costs, and the Bill requires registration of the imposition of cautions.

Mr Dean's proposals provide grants of £50 for external fire-escape, £100 for fire-resistant door and up to £500 for external fire-escape. Mr Albert Stallard, MP for Camden, St North and chairman all-party committee, motion calling for an amendment and request meeting with Mr Haseldine, Secretary for the Environment.

Staged rises if awards exceed limit

By David Felton

Labour Reporter

The Government has decided that if the pay awards in the public sector exceed a limit of 500,000 white collar civil servants which exceed its cash limit must be paid in stages.

Unions which accepted staging of pay awards last year will be unhappy with the decision. It will demand payment in full of the increases they believe are indicated by independent pay research evidence.

Those increases are expected to range between 18 and 20 per cent while the Government has set an upper limit of 16 per cent, with up to 20,000 job losses.

Sir John Herberg, Second Permanent Secretary at the Civil Service Department, last night told the Commons Select Committee on the Treasury and Civil Service that the Government will insist that the difference is made up by the pay awards being made at several stages during the year from the beginning of next month.

Civil Service unions will decide at a meeting next week whether to take industrial action over the cash limits. A series of membership meetings around the country over the next month will be held by the Society of Civil and Public Servants, which has 105,000 members, supported the union's national leadership in industrial action if necessary.

Sir John was closely questioned by MPs at the committee on the size of the service. Several members said they had been led to believe that the number of civil servants would be reduced by 12,000 to below 700,000 in April next year.

John said that because of increased work loads in several departments, caused by the economic climate, the figure would be about 715,000. That did not take into account the 15,000 to 20,000 job cuts expected next year by the pay negotiations.

He said extra staff had been taken on in the Department of Health and Social Security and the Department of Employment mainly because more people were claiming benefits.

Thatcher view is optimistic

By Our Political Editor

A change in people's attitudes in Britain towards taking more responsibility has been detected by the Prime Minister and it leads her to "trust that we will be out of the wood in two or three years."

The words were used by Mrs Margaret Thatcher in an interview published yesterday with Die Welt, the Hamburg daily newspaper, according to the Foreign Office translation circulated at Westminster.

Mrs Thatcher admitted to her interviewer, Herr Rainer Harzel, that the change in attitude "does not look like a large-scale political success, but it is one."

She gave scant evidence, but was presumably referring to the encouragement she has recently taken from the BL workers' and steelworkers' refusal to strike, as well as the attitudes among workers in the private steel industry.

Mrs Thatcher emphasised that freely negotiated wage settlements were one of the four freedoms Britain was now enjoying, along with the lifting of controls on prices, dividends and currency movements.

Fewer companies were also coming forward and asking for subsidies.

"The enormous change in basic attitudes also lies in the fact that people are again prepared to assume responsibility, which some had already forgotten."

Mrs Thatcher added that inflation and public expenditure had to be reduced to encourage people to accept greater responsibility.

The interview was notable for a stirring reiteration of Britain's commitment to defend Berlin and West Germany. "If the Federal Republic is in danger, then we are in danger. If Berlin is in danger, then we are in danger."

Mrs Thatcher also held up the successful granting of independence to Rhodesia as an example of what Britain "does and can do for Europe in problems which were previously virtually insoluble."

Government decide adjourn Ulster talks

From Christopher Thomas

The Government decided yesterday to try to adjourn its constitutional conference on power devolution to Northern Ireland by Easter. The Cabinet will get an early report on the outcome and proposals for further discussion will be drawn up.

Delegates of the Social Democratic and Labour Party and the Alliance Party made clear to Mr Humphrey Allister, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, that the clash over power-sharing had brought the talks in effect to an end and that the agony should not be prolonged much longer.

The only scheduled meeting that evening was for the evening and on March 31 but there is some prospect of additional days being set aside so that all items on the 14-point agenda can be properly discussed.

The outcome is, actually, disappointing to the Government. The Lord L. Paisley, the "loyalist" representative at the conference, scuttled any hopes of success by his outright refusal to accept the principle.

Quite clearly the motions to complete items on the agenda.

Mr Paisley now sums most in the all-party propaganda war that is a background to the co. The rival Official believe its boycott time-wasting talks, but Mr F. bound, in the next day to exercise his gifts o to try to justify his and explain the outco

Whistlers sale postpone

The 11 pictures by Whistler which Glasgow University is planning to sell won a reprieve yesterday when the university court, its governing body, agreed to postpone arrangements for the sale for one month.

Members of the court agreed to seek other ways of finding the money needed to meet a £320,000 deficit on their new art gallery, which is to be opened in June.

Protests about the proposed sale had come from heritage and arts bodies, including the

Standing Committee Museums and Galleries pressure group, Her Danger.

One possibility to be gated is whether more found from the new Heritage Fund, to be s April 1.

Mr Hugh Leggart, of Heritage in Danger, "I do hope the Herits trustees will give sy consideration o the un plight, particularly in the large sum the at themselves have raised new building."

Correction

Mr Stephen Hastings, 1 dize MP for Mid Bedi voted for the Governor on the Olympic Games or and did not abstain, as in The Times on Tuesd

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Professor 'a third closer' to eight score draws

By Alan Hamilton

Professor Frank George, of Brunel University, Uxbridge, has claimed a significant measure of success in harnessing science to one of mankind's most intractable problems, picking eight score draws on a football pitch.

By applying the discipline of statistics, the logic of mathematics and the memory of a computer to forecasting sporting events on which high sums, and higher hopes, are placed, Professor George says in the New Scientist magazine, he has reduced the odds against winning by a third.

His system is explained in full in the magazine, but great mathematical aptitude is required to understand it fully. It involves a complex study and analysis of form than the average punter's brain can assimilate (hence the computer), together with a complex formula for narrowing the element of chance.

The professor, who holds the chair of cybernetics at Brunel, counsels: "The methods I use greatly increase your chance of success, but without guaranteeing a win. Luck is still necessary and patience is absolutely vital."

Using his method his wife won £2,000 last season, and a friend £10,000. The professor

does not do the pools. "I am less interested in large sums of money than in the quality of life," he said yesterday.

The only certain way to win a first dividend, he admitted, was to bet on every possible combination of eight score draws in 55 matches. The drawback is that it would require a stake of £6,087,831.75. Using his system, he believes, the odds against winning are reduced to a mere eight million to one.

"You have to try to allow for the unexpected, however good your form analysis is. But whoever could have forecast that Harlow Town would draw at Leicester?" the professor asked.

Littlewoods, the pools promoters, were unimpressed by the professor's plan. Arguing over a week for an entire season had a one-in-80 chance of winning something, however small, their spokesman in Liverpool said.

In spite of his efforts to reduce the unexpected for as far as possible to mathematical calculation, Professor George admits that at the end of the day he has to rely on a concept foreign to the coldly logical computer, the hunch. He said that on Saturday his City will draw with United in the Manchester derby. Only seven more draws to go.

Welsh water offer rejected

From Our Own Correspondent

Cardiff

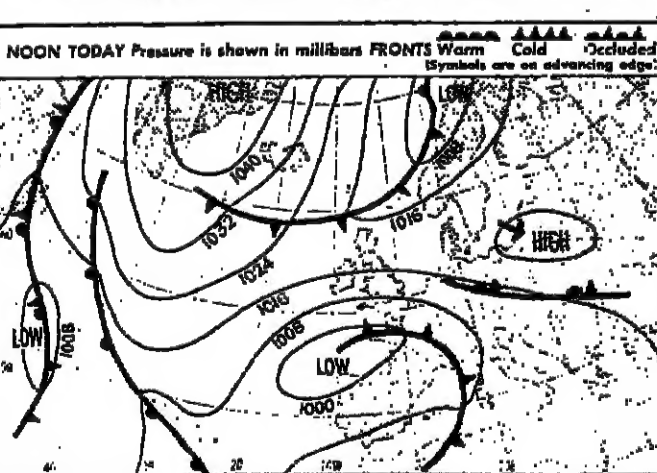
Manual workers employed by the Welsh Water Authority have rejected a 21.4 per cent national pay offer despite being told by national officers of the National Union of Public Employees that only industrial action can secure a better deal.

The Welsh workers are the first of 33,000 water board employees throughout Britain, who are voting on the offer, this week to make public their de-

cision. A Nupe official in Wales said his men were seeking parity with their counterparts in the electricity and gas industries, and recent awards made there meant that the water workers were seeking a settlement in the region of 30 per cent.

The official said that a strike would have an immediate effect. "We have people which we have not touched but who were clearly not satisfied with this latest offer."

Weather forecast and recordings



NOON TODAY Pressure is shown in millibars. Fronts Warm (solid line with triangles) Cold (dashed line with triangles) are on advancing edge. Symbols are as on page 1.

Today
Sun rises: 7.3 am. Sun sets: 7.14 pm.
Moon rises: 12.12 am. Moon sets: 12.12 am.

First quarter: March 23.
Lighting up: 7.44 pm to 6.31 am.
High Water: London Bridge, 5.6 am, 7.7m; 5.35 pm, 7.5m. Avon: 10.49 am, 14.0m; 11.2 pm, 13.4m. Dover, 2.2 am, 7.0m; 2.26 pm, 6.7m. Hull, 9.37 am, 5.6m; 9.49 pm, 7.8m. Liverpool, 2.38 am, 5.7m; 2.47 pm, 9.8m. Lr: 0.3048m. 1m=3.2808ft.

A depression is moving north to the S of Britain while a trough of low pressure will approach N Scotland. Forecasts for 6 am to midnight: London, Central S and Central N England, Midlands: Mostly dry, rather cloudy; wind NE, strong, decreasing to moderate; max temp 3° to 4° C (37° to 39° F).

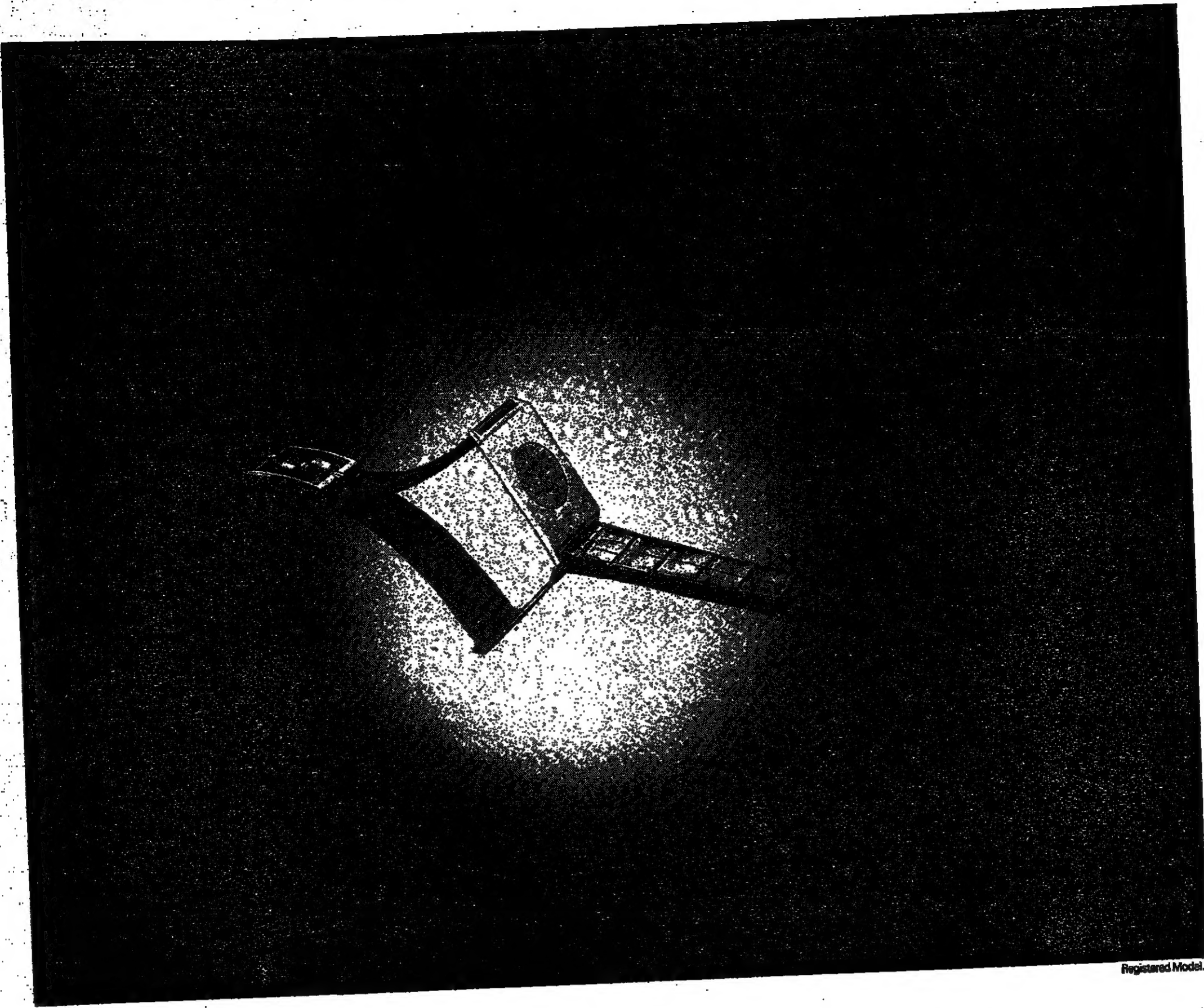
SE and E England, East Anglia, Channel Islands: Rather cloudy, slight rain or sleet at times, wind E, strong, locally gale, decreasing to moderate; max temp 3° C (37° F).

SW England, Wales: Rather cloudy, sun, sleet, rain, snow.

WEATHER REPORTS YESTERDAY c, cloud; f, fair; r, rain; s, sun; sl, sleet; sn, snow.

SW			England, Wales: Rather			first: Sea very rough, moderate to rough.		
Weather reports yesterday MIDDAY: c, cloud; f, fair;								
London, sun, 10; 12; 10;								

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**Ω
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HOME NEWS

1,000 British kidney patients die as shortage of staff curbs dialysis or transplants, doctor says

By Annabel Ferriman

Health Services Correspondent

An estimated 1,000 patients died in Britain last year from kidney failure because treatment was not available, Dr Antony Wing of the European Dialysis and Transplantation Association, said yesterday.

Britain had fallen behind in providing dialysis or transplantation because of a lack of resources. From being a pioneer in the 1960s, it was now behind at least 11 other European countries, he said.

There were slightly more than 1,000 new patients in 1978, and that figure probably represented just over half of those who required treatment. The rest were left to die.

The problem was not a lack of kidney machines, but a shortage of staff to run them all the time, to teach the patients how to use them and to nurse the patients who required treatment, he said.

Dr Wing, a consultant physician specializing in renal medicine, said that Britain was also less inclined to treat patients over 45 with dialysis or transplants compared with other European countries.

"Some of us have to tell lies to older patients, partly to make the patients more comfortable and partly to make ourselves more comfortable."

"We have to say to them that their hearts are too dodgy to stand the strain of dialysis. But we are getting fed up with telling lies", he said.

Dr Wing said it was possible to deduce that Britain was treating only just over half of those who required it by comparing the rates of treatment in Britain with the rates of other European countries.

Britain accepted for treatment by dialysis or transplant only 21 new patients per million in the population in 1978, compared with between 30 and 40 per million in many other countries.

The National Kidney Research Fund was looking for more than £1m for research into kidney disease and transplantation. Last year the fund had £447,000 for research and had to reject half the research projects put to it.

More than 1,500 patients were awaiting transplants, although Britain was higher up the European league table in providing transplants than in providing dialysis. In 1978, 930 transplants were carried out in Britain, which at 17 per million of population was higher than in any other European country except Norway, Finland, Sweden and Denmark.

Dr Wing said it was cheaper and more satisfying for the patient to have a transplant than to provide dialysis. Hospital dialysis costs about £10,000 a year, whereas a kidney transplant costs about £10,000 for the first year, but only about £3,000 for the second year and £1,000 a year after that, depending on what drugs were used.

Survival rates for transplants

had substantially improved over the past five years. Survival in young adults in the past three years was 70 per cent at three months and 53 per cent at three years. If the transplant did not work, the patient did not die but went back on dialysis.

One of Dr Wing's patients, Mrs Vera Charters, from Isleworth, Middlesex, who has been on dialysis for five years, said she was hoping for a transplant.

"Dialysis is no better than half a life. I am up here six hours a day, three days a week and on the other days I do not feel that great," she said.

The annual report from the organization, *UK Transplant*, which was published yesterday, showed that since 1972 Britain had carried out 4,761 transplants using kidneys from dead bodies.

The leading British centres are: Guy's Hospital, London (529 transplants); Birmingham (512); Newcastle (341); Cambridge (277); Manchester (254); Liverpool (203); Cardiff (198); Oxford (185); Glasgow (178); Royal Free Hospital, London (161); Leeds (155); and Edinburgh (137).

The report is available from Southmead Hospital, Bristol.

Canoeists rescued

Three Army cadet canoeists and their instructor were rescued from high seas by a Royal Navy helicopter two and a half miles off Exmouth, Devon, yesterday.

Study urged of new childbirth technology

By Our Health Services Correspondent

Elaborate and expensive pieces of equipment have been introduced into the process of childbirth without any systematic studies of their advantages and disadvantages, a report published today states.

The report, produced by the Council for Science and Society, says that the monitoring of bodily processes made possible by modern technology was more sensitive, more reliable, and usually cheaper than was possible for human observers unaided, and thereby contributed to safety.

It also extended the range of procedures that could be applied and properly used, should give professional staff more time to spend in meeting the psychological needs of patients.

But there were dangers. "Elaborate equipment tends to divert the attention of staff, and to mystify patients and add to their anxiety. And equipment goes wrong, sometimes suddenly and dangerously."

The working party drawing up the report, which included a consultant obstetrician, a former midwife and a professor of mental health, recommends that more information be collected and used to discover which equipment is the most useful.

Childbirth Today (Council for Science and Society, 3/4, St Andrew's Hill, London, EC4V 5BY, £1.50 paperback or £4 hardback, 30p postage).



Rarest stamp: Mr Howard Fraser, chairman of Stanley Gibbons International, examining the world's most valuable stamp, the British Guiana 1856 one cent black on magenta, which is an display in Gibbons's London premises before

being offered at auction in New York on April 1. It was last on offer, in New York in 1970, it fetched £10,000. The stamp was originally discovered in 1873 by a schoolboy in Demerara, British Guiana.

Four suggestions to make up for school bus fares

By Our Education Correspondent

Alternative ways of raising the £1.6m needed by Kent to make up for the loss of expected income from school transport charges were approved yesterday by the education subcommittee of the county's finance and general purposes committee.

The subcommittee proposed that school meal charges should

be raised to 45p from April 1, producing an estimated saving of more than £250,000; that adult education fees should be further increased to produce savings of £170,000; and that spending on books and equipment in schools and colleges should be cut by at least £200,000.

It also recommended that more than £200,000 should be saved by replacing only "key"

teaching posts in schools. Each post would be examined individually as to its necessity and a decision taken on the basis of the subject and the school involved, on whether a new appointment should be made.

The subcommittee said that a group should be set up to examine discretionary school transport after some council-ors had suggested that Roman Catholics and others who

enjoyed free school transport should pay the nearest state school pay the full fare.

Kent is one of a local education authority in England and Wales which allows its education budgets to be drawn from school bus charges. It is one of the few authorities in the country which would be enacted.

Buccaneer test flight in hunt for crash cause

By Arthur Reed

Air Correspondent

The British Aerospace works at Brough, Humberside, is planning to modify a Buccaneer strike aircraft with strain gauges and other test equipment in an effort to discover what caused an RAF Buccaneer to crash in the United States with the loss of both crew members.

The test aircraft will be flown from the airfield at Spalding Moor in manoeuvres designed to put increasing loads on the mainplane front spar of the inner wing. It is thought that that wing of the RAF aircraft, which was taking part in a bombing exercise, may have cracked in flight.

Witnesses said they saw a wing break away before the crash, and a examination of the wreckage found cracks in the spar. But no final conclusions about the crash cause are being drawn by the British aircraft industry until tests are complete.

After cracking had been found in the wings of some others, all 30 Buccaneers operated by the RAF in West Germany, and 50 in Britain, were grounded, although the crews remain ready to fly them in an emergency.

While air tests are being prepared for an RAF Buccaneer found to be free of cracks, British Aerospace will carry out ground tests on two of the aircraft which have bad cracks.

The suspect parts placed in a fatigue rig tested to the kind of forces experienced in at a far greater frequency than in normal flight. It is hoped the tests will show why the RAF Buccaneer crashed. The aircraft was on a test flight when it crashed in the United States with the loss of both crew members.

The rig has had a constantly under stress more "flying" hours been completed by a aircraft in squadron service.

A decision will be made on the basis of the test results. The RAF's Buccaneers provide an important part of the NATO low-level strike force. The aircraft are now being flown by the RAF in West Germany, and 50 in Britain, were grounded, although the crews remain ready to fly them in an emergency.

One theory in the industry is that the may have been caused by a crack in the wing. The aircraft were found to have bad cracks.

Race IQ scores 'cannot attributed to test bias'

By Diana Geddes

Education Correspondent

The wide differences in the intelligence scores of blacks and whites in the United States cannot be attributed to any bias in the mental tests used to measure intelligence, Professor Arthur Jensen contends in an 800-page study of mental testing, published today.

Professor Jensen, who is professor of educational psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, caused controversy throughout the world when he claimed in an article in the *Harvard Educational Review* in 1969 that 80 per cent of the variation in intelligence test scores could probably be attributed to genetic factors, and that black people in the United States were some 15 intelligence quotient (IQ) points lower than white people.

His critics were quick to attack his findings on the ground that the most widely used standardized tests of mental ability were culturally biased and unfair to racial minority groups.

In his latest book Professor Jensen sets out in detail the results of his extensive research

into the notion that quality of reason manipulative intelligence contrast to memorization other forms of memory.

He concludes that: 1. The argument that better than blacks have larger vocabularies is wrong. In fact, blacks are slightly better at verbal tests than on non-verbal tests.

2. IQ tests, both verbal and non-verbal, are not equally "white culture" tests. The verbal tests, which are actually do better on loaded tests than on "fair" tests, which are constructed to root out class whites than to blacks. 3. The idea that "cultured" tests drawn up by whites inevitably favour whites is wrong. In a Japanese of the American V intelligence scale for Japanese children average six points higher than white American children. 4. When white and black men of equal socio-economic status are tested, whites on average 12 IQ points than blacks. *Bias in Mental Testing* (1979, 151s).

Scots MPs to question BBC about cuts

From Our Own Correspondent

Glasgow

The Scottish select committee of MPs is to question BBC officials about the proposed disbandment of the BBC Scottish-Symphony Orchestra and a reduction of education programmes produced in Scotland. The committee expects that Mr Patrick Ramsay, controller of BBC Scotland, will be among those giving evidence at the Commons hearing within the next two weeks.

The European Parliament committee dealing with education and the arts yesterday sent a telegram to Mr Norman St John-Stevas, minister responsible for the BBC, urging the Government not to cut educational broadcasting and the number of BBC orchestras.

Rugby player accused of bodily harm

From Our Correspondent

Wolverhampton

Cordoba Doble, captain of Wolverhampton rugby club, is charged with grievous bodily harm after a match at Wolverhampton last night.

Mr Doble, 34, of Pen Avenue, Tettenhall, is charged with grievous bodily harm after a match at Wolverhampton last night.

Mr Higley, who was for Stourbridge, was a former England Colts captain and a career in the game had ended. Mr Doble is a toolmaker and brother, Sam, who died in 1977, played for Macclesfield, England.

The Ayatollah, Yugoslavia, Michael Edwardes and BSC?

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20/3/80 1:50

possibility of violence alienated blacks feared by race body

Evans, a senior correspondent for the commission, said yesterday the issue was dealt with in the past. We are committed to avoid added.

speaking at a press conference to introduce a book on youth in multi-racial which was published by the commission, as a lack of action, of warnings given as in 1967.

at committee's report and the youth said: "If England be the scene of race violence for the future, it may be too late."

skit says that black particular feel that subjected to constant necessary police. "Insensitive behaviour police, such as the d subsequent release nity relations staff in hich caused the 'break local liaison committee long-term struggle to race relations,"

relations training than most bodies, the booklet says, yet prejudice still exists. Many white magistrates and magistrates' clerks serving in multi-racial areas do not have adequate knowledge of minority groups.

Greater emphasis should be given to community policing, in the commission's view, and less to mobile patrols.

The booklet refers to large groups of black youths living near the centre of big cities who are virtually or totally alienated from society.

"Government should see the needs of alienated and at-risk young black people as the highest priority," the booklet says. "Unless policy is able to tackle their needs, there is a danger that we will create a whole generation of alienated black adults."

The commission wants a minister for youth to give the needs of young blacks greater priority, with funds allocated to deal with them. Local authorities should have a youth policy committee and youth policy unit.

The Government should urge the Association of Chief Police Officers and individual police authorities to continue to adopt more sensitive policing practices in multi-racial areas. Ethnic minority organizations should be involved in improved forms of disposal of juvenile cases by magistrates.

Young in Multi-Racial Society: the urgent need for new policies (Commission for Racial Equality, £1.50).



Photograph by Chris Ball

Mr Dirk Bogarde (right) talking to a fellow actor, Mr Edward Fox, at a London luncheon yesterday to mark the publication of his new book.

Newspapers breached advertising code

By Robin Young

Complaints against two newspapers have been upheld by the Advertising Standards Authority because of special offers made in breach of the British code of advertising practice.

A complaint against the Daily Express was upheld because a toaster described as "brand new" was just off the assembly line and was almost identical to

a model which had been on sale for more than a year.

The Observer was criticised for failing to include a full postal address in the body copy of an advertisement for one of its special offers.

In another case the authority criticized the publishers of the magazine History Today for an advertisement which was headlined "What happened when

the Nazis and Zionists joined forces" and showed a symbol uniting the Star of David with the swastika.

The authority concluded that the advertisers had genuinely tried to avoid giving offence, but in spite of their efforts a substantial section of Jewish opinion had been gravely upset, so the complaints had to be upheld to that extent.

Coalfield in Midlands 'can yield 350m tonnes'

From Our Correspondent Derby

The National Coal Board has found coal seams 20ft thick in a new coalfield in central Warwickshire, which may be two-thirds the size of that in the Vale of Belvoir, county officials have been told.

The newly found field is thought to contain 2,850 million tonnes of coal. It is estimated that 350 million tonnes could be recovered, giving a life of more than a century to any pits sunk.

The new field, covering 370 square kilometres, is south of Coventry, close to Leamington Spa and Kenilworth. It is expected to take between 11 and 15 years from the time the coal board decides to submit a planning application until coal is extracted.

"This is the biggest post-war event the county is likely to experience", Mr P. G. Swann, Warwickshire county planning officer, has said in a report to his council.

A coal board project team is studying the feasibility of the scheme but the board has not yet considered recommendations on pit shaft sites.

In his report Mr Swann said: "Members will rightly be cautious about the developing situation."

Unlike Belvoir, central Warwickshire is densely populated, and comprises many activities of an industrial, commercial, cultural and leisure nature, which could be seriously disturbed by large scale coal mining.

One adult in 10 risks 'becoming alcoholic'

By a Staff Reporter

Alcoholism is now an epidemic and one adult in every 10 in England and Wales, about five million altogether has biochemical disorders linked with drinking regular amounts of alcohol probably regarded as normal, doctors state in a report published yesterday.

"These people are probably dependent, although they are at present unharmed", the report, by the 2,000-member Faculty of Community Medicine (part of the Royal College of Physicians) says. But they were at risk of becoming alcoholics in the sense of those harmed by long-term drinking.

Deaths from cirrhosis of the liver had doubled in number within a generation to 2,000 a year, and more than half a million adults in England and Wales alone were estimated to be alcoholics or those harmfully affected by long-term drinking.

Taking Britain as a whole, the number had been estimated at about a million.

Professor Sir John Brotherton, president of the faculty, said yesterday: "Cirrhosis is a dreadful disease; such a horrible way for people to die, and specifically related to alcohol consumption. But alcoholics are also at risk of cancers of the head and neck, strokes and heart and chest disease."

The report calls on the Government to increase tax on alcohol, cut the number of outlets,

such as supermarkets, where drink can be bought, and ban all advertising for drink except at the point of sale.

Drinking levels must be cut, it adds. "The closer one approaches a level of four or more pints of beer each day, or its equivalent in wine or spirits, the greater the danger of long-term harm."

Sir John said that whisky ought to be two or three times the present price. "In relation to bread, the staff of life, the cost of beer and whisky has fallen considerably in the past 25 years."

The report estimates that consumption in Britain a head has doubled in 25 years.

Drinking was a burden not only on the health service but also on prisons and the social services. Convictions for drinking and driving offences had more than doubled since 1950 and now caused about 1,200 deaths a year, about one in five of all road deaths. Drinking was also linked with violence, broken marriages and battering, and absenteeism.

The faculty calls for 1 per cent of the revenue derived by the Government from drink to be diverted to health education against alcoholism. That would amount to about £23m on last year's £2,339m total.

Particular attention should be paid to certain occupation groups associated with high risk, including the drink business, entertainment, the Services, journalism and medicine.

A Recommendation for Prevention of Alcohol Related Disorders, Royal College of Physicians, 28 Portland Place, London, W1N 4PE (free).

'threats to electors'

By Philip Warman

Cardiff

Measures to save the small villages of mid-Wales from continuing social and economic decline were announced yesterday by the Development Board for Rural Wales in the wake of alarming reports of rural deprivation in public transport, shops, jobs, post offices and schools.

For decades the area from the head of the southern coal valleys to Snowdonia in the north has suffered economically and socially as lack of job opportunities drove young people to seek work elsewhere.

That trend has been halted in the larger towns, where special incentives have attracted factories which offer hope of employment to school-leavers. But the remote villages have little hope of attracting industrialists.

In an effort to reverse that decline the board has announced that it is to offer special initiatives to 25 villages in the area.

Based on a self-help pattern, the villages will be offered expert guidance to establish small businesses and shops, run community buses and establish social projects.

Firebomb found: The Welsh holiday home fire-raisers may have chosen a new target, the railway station at Northmadog, Gwynedd, on the Festiniog railway, used by thousands of holiday-makers every summer.

An Army bomb disposal team from Hereford, flown to the scene by RAF helicopter, defused the bomb.

Leading article, page 19

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Help offered to declining rural Wales

From Tim Jones

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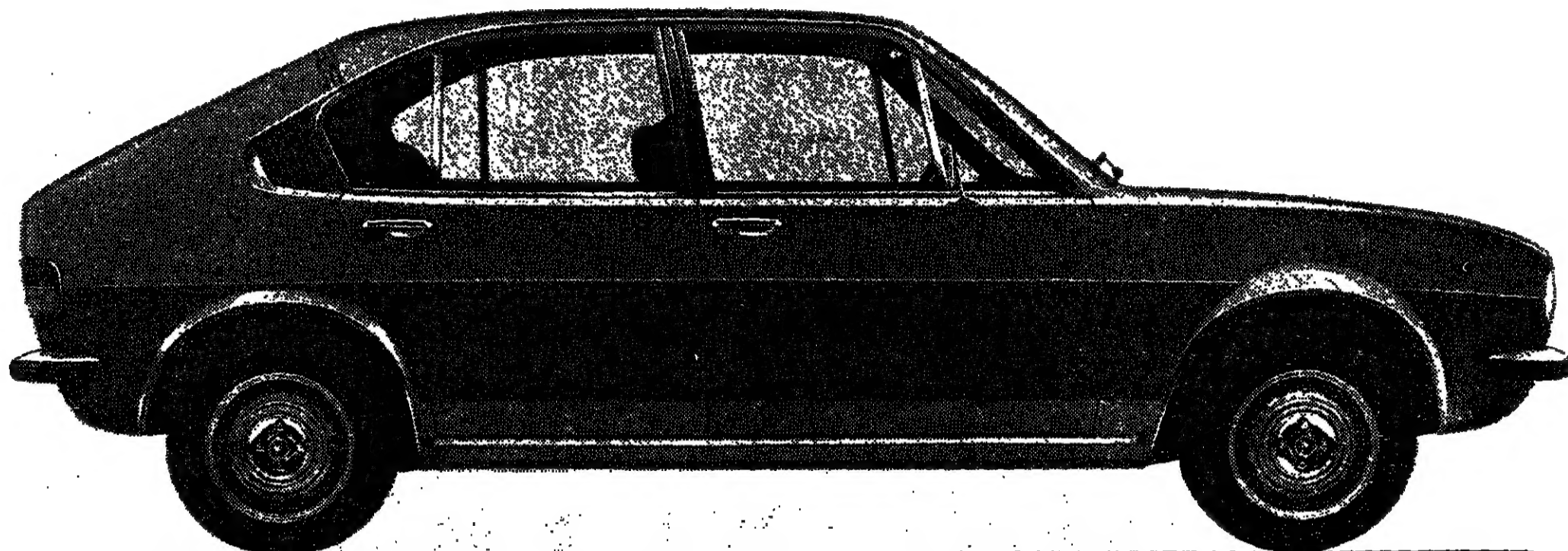
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*Official Government figures: GTV 2000: Urban cycle 21.1mpg (13.4L/100km), Constant 56mph (90km/h) 42.2mpg (6.7L/100km), Constant 75mph (120km/h) 51.4mpg (9.1L/100km), Allegro 1100 Deluxe: Urban cycle 31.6mpg (9.9L/100km), Constant 56mph (90km/h) 41.1mpg (6.9L/100km), Constant 75mph (120km/h) 51.4mpg (9.1L/100km).

COUNTRY LIFE
SPRING GARDENS NUMBERSpring Gardens
Number

WHO'S WHO OF GARDEN DESIGNERS

Arthur Hellyer describes the gardens of Mottisfont Abbey, Hampshire, which were created by a succession of eminent designers since 1800, and which contain much more than the renowned roses.

WELSH POPPIES TO TIBETAN BLUES

Mary Gallup reviews the range of meconopsis and some of the varieties in cultivation today.

IMPECCABLE ALPINES

Will Ingwersen makes a personal choice of some rock plants that are perfect in flower and form.

PLANTING IN WOODLAND

Roy Lancaster considers some special measures necessary when gardening in woodland shade, where tree roots abound and plants compete for light and sustenance.

ROTTEN TO THE CORE

A.G. Healey suggests an uncomplicated programme of spraying and other measures to control pests and diseases of garden fruit.

COUNTRY LIFE
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HOME NEWS

'Widespread breaches' of discrimination Act over women teachers

By Frances Gibb

Widespread breaches of the Sex Discrimination Act within the teaching profession, involving in particular married women with children, are revealed in a survey published today by the National Union of Teachers.

The survey of 3,000 women teachers, backed by the Equal Opportunities Commission with a £4,000 grant, shows that some local authority officers and councillors, head and senior teachers, break the law when making appointments.

It also shows that despite the Equal Pay Act nearly 80 per cent of women teachers are on the lowest two salary scales compared with 50 per cent of men teachers. Although men and women teachers receive equal pay, the average salary for a woman teacher remains far lower than that for a man.

The extent of discrimination is sufficiently widespread, the NUT says, to cause it "disquiet and concern". Mr. Jack Chambers, chairman of the NUT equal opportunities committee, said: "Our main concern is that this research is the first visible sign of a profound iceberg of discrimination against women, which is consigning them to a lower status in society."

A quarter of unsuccessful internal applicants and slightly fewer external applicants felt they had been discriminated against in applying for jobs. One example of discrimination was a Leamington primary school which stated as a qualification for the job the ability to sing in the local church male choir.

Breaches of the law occur in several ways. Jobs are covertly earmarked, so that although the advertisement asks simply for a teacher, the employers already have in mind that they want a man or a woman.

Graded posts are allocated in such a way that they favour men. For instance, many of the

highest grade posts are linked to other jobs such as running the physical education or boys' games, the survey says.

Women are discriminated against when applying for jobs by the kind of questions they are asked. These include such questions as whether they are hoping to have a family, whether their husbands move around in their jobs and what their husbands think of their applications.

The survey shows that although women make up nearly 60 per cent of the teaching profession in England and Wales, they hold just under 40 per cent of headships.

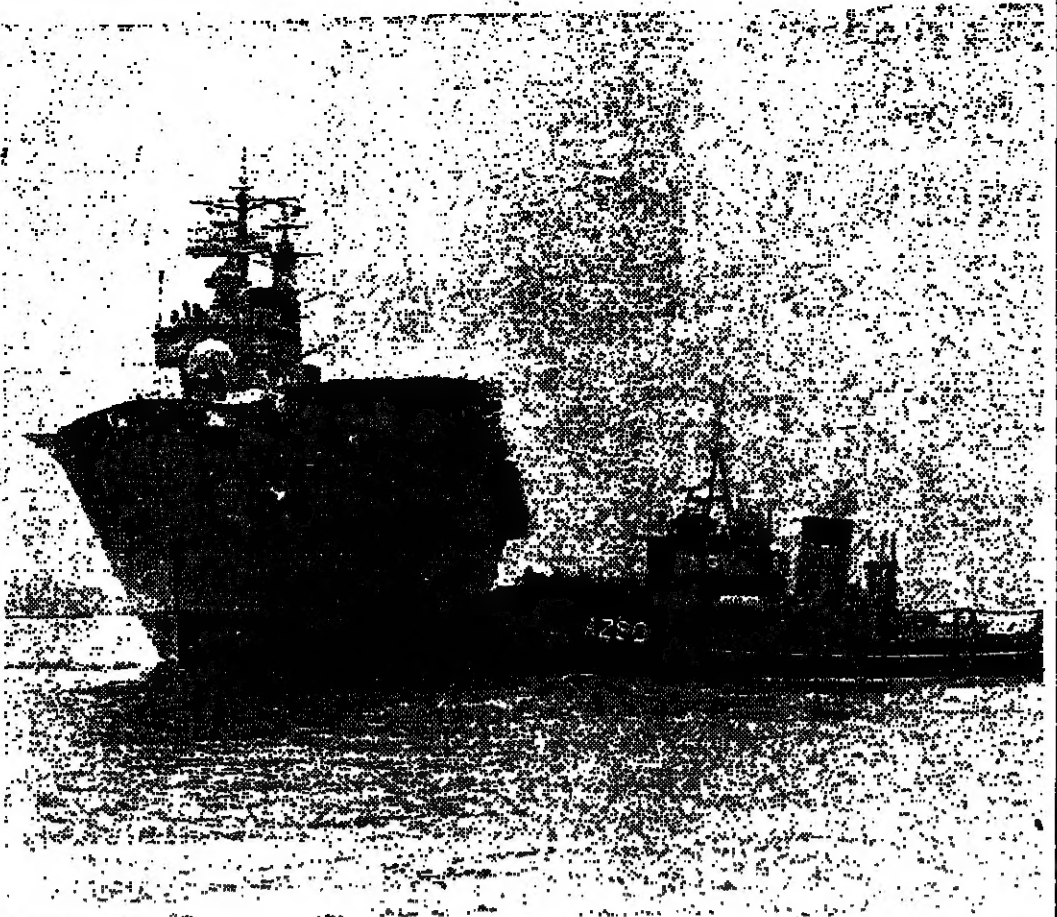
Married women, particularly those with children, are most discriminated against, it says. Although most married women have a break from teaching to have children, they still earn less than a single woman with equivalent length of experience when they return.

Women are concentrated in primary schools (77 per cent of the full-time teaching force) but have only 43 per cent of the headships. In secondary schools, they account for 44 per cent of the teaching force and one per cent of the headships.

The survey also demolishes the myth that women teachers are married, have family commitments and are not interested in promotion. The survey says that all teachers, young, old, single and childless, are related to that image, with inevitable disastrous consequences for their career prospects.

The NUT, which has four women on its 44-member executive, said that the findings had led to a policy change which represented an important departure in its thinking about women.

It is planning a detailed analysis of teachers' salaries at all levels and an extensive publicity campaign of its findings. It is also setting up local working groups to collect and disseminate evidence on discrimination.



The anti-submarine cruiser Invincible, the largest warship to be built for the Royal Navy for 25 years, being helped by a tug to her mooring at Portsmouth yesterday.

Royal Navy accepts Invincible

From Henry Stanhope
Defence Correspondent
Portsmouth

The £175m Invincible, which at 19,500 tons is the biggest warship to be built in Britain for a quarter of a century, was finally accepted into service by the Royal Navy at Portsmouth yesterday.

She is the first of three anti-submarine carriers, once better known as through-deck cruisers, conceived in the 1960s after the Government had abandoned plans to build a large conven-

tional aircraft carrier to succeed the Ark Royal.

"This is a proud day for the Royal Navy and the start of a new era in naval aviation", Admiral Sir Henry Leach, the First Sea Lord, said in a signal which was read by Captain Michael Livesey, who took over command.

The red ensign was lowered, the white ensign was raised to flutter frantically in the breeze and the shipyard crew who had sailed the ship from Barrow for the ceremony left to catch the train home.

The first job for the naval crew, which eventually will total 900, will be to take the ship into dry dock to be fitted with anti-submarine sonar equipment and new propellers.

Both Captain Livesey and Mr William Richardson, chairman

of Vickers Shipbuilding Group, strenuously denied that there was anything wrong with the existing propellers, but adjustments had to be made to achieve perfection and the old set would serve as spares.

The Invincible will be armed with Sea Dart anti-aircraft missiles and equipped with nine Sea King helicopters and five Sea Harrier vertical take-off aircraft, whose performance will be improved considerably by the seven-degree ramp, the so-called ski-jump, on the forward end of the flight deck.

After emerging from dry dock in three weeks she will begin a series of trials in the Channel before being commissioned into the Fleet in July by the Queen, who launched her at Barrow three years ago.

The Invincible will not be fully operational, however, until the middle of next year.

Police back integrity of the DPP

By Our Home Affairs Correspondent

Mr James Jardine, the Police Federation chairman, said yesterday that members resented efforts to cast doubt on the integrity of the Director of Public Prosecutions and his judgment in cases involving the police.

He said, at a meeting of the Federation at Ipswich: "If the day ever comes when the director feels it necessary to yield to public clamour and to start putting up police officers as sacrifices to the prejudices of people who take it for granted that the police are always in the wrong, then that will be the day when a mortal blow is struck, not only at the police service but, at the rule of law in this country."

Where police officers were the subject of complaints of criminal behaviour the decision on whether prosecution should follow should continue to be based on well-established legal principles, he said.

He added: "The DPP should make his own decision as to whether the evidence justifies a prosecution of a police officer. The standard of evidence to justify such a prosecution must be the same as the standard of evidence in justify prosecution of any other citizen."

The Federation rejected the suggestion that the public interest was best served by putting police officers through a criminal trial even though the DPP knew the probability of conviction was lower than he would normally expect.

Guidance by bishop church cooperation

By Our Religious Affairs Correspondent

Guidelines for local cooperation with other denominations are issued today by the bishops of the Church of England to ensure uniformity of practice and to make policy easily accessible.

They contain no substantial changes in approach, but represent a distillation of existing arrangements. They are the result of an unsuccessful attempt to deal with local ecumenical relations by legislation in 1975, in the course of which the general synod's overall view emerged that a code of practice would be preferable to amendments to canon law.

The new code specifies that in certain circumstances, such as official "areas of ecumenical experiment" or shared church buildings, people may be admitted simultaneously as members of all the participating denominations, and hold joint church membership.

Earlier deafness test

More than half of children with a significant hearing loss are not diagnosed as deaf until they are three years old, a report published yesterday states.

The National Deaf Children's Society report says that population screening should be carried out by health visitors on children aged eight months to ensure early diagnosis of deafness and enable medical and educational help to be given.

Children are losing valuable time in acquiring language, the report says. The society set up a working party last year to look at the procedures by which babies and young children are

tested for hearing. Mrs Winifred T. man of the world the mother of two said: "Parents often have considerable problems with their deaf children."

"If the procedure our screening paper out, this first greatest hurdle would be removed. Normal children speak naturally around them, but a deaf baby, a long acquire language, says.

New formula costs cancer deal

By Pearce Wright

The National Radiological Protection Board has stepped into one of the most sensitive areas of the nuclear energy controversy with a report published today that proposes a method of cost-benefit analysis for public safety. It provides a formula for placing a monetary value on cancer deaths.

The calculation uses a complex equation which on one side has the cost of cutting the level of routine discharges of radioactive substances and, on the other side the consequent reduction in exposure of the population and hence a drop in cancer risk.

The report is issued as a consultation document. Dr M. J. Clark, one of the authors, said that that type of analysis was being suggested only as one of the factors that could be used by Government advisers, safety inspectors and operators of nuclear plant in making decisions about routine discharges of radiation.

The study was prompted by the adoption in Britain of the principles of the latest recommendations of the International Radiological Protection Commission, published as ICRP-26.

Three recommendations are made: no activity giving rise to an exposure of radiation was justified unless it produced a net positive benefit; all exposures should be kept as low as reasonably achievable, economic and social factors being taken into account; and the exposure of individuals should not exceed the maximum limits recommended for given circumstances by the commission.

The proposals for a cost-

benefit analysis address the second of those principles. The method draws on the procedures of the insurance industry for evaluating risk and assigning a monetary value to life. In addition, it incorporates other factors connected specifically with the exposure to radiation to which a monetary weighting has also been attached.

Those include putting a monetary cost on the decline in health that would be associated with exposure to radiation. That covers the costs from an increasing incidence of fatal and non-fatal cancers and the costs from a rise in the number of inherited defects.

The statistics on those diseases are already a matter of dispute between scientists studying the effects of low levels of radiation, but the figures taken for the cost-benefit analysis are those used by the international commission.

They are under constant review, but they were compiled originally in the late 1950s, when it became apparent from leukaemia and other types of cancer among Japanese bomb victims that there were late effects of exposure to radiation.

Before allocating a monetary value to either the cost of protection or the costs arising from an increase in disease, the National Radiological Protection Board's group has calculated the risk factor for cancers induced by radiation.

For instance, one table shows that an increase of one millirem exposure to every individual in the population means a risk of 100 more cases of fatal cancer

for men and 150 women. That is per lifetime of the exposure.

Dr Clark says the method is designed to provide a basis for calculation of the costs and benefits of nuclear power on a grand scale. It is not intended to be used for individual cases.

The application of the analysis is under at sensitive subjects of power on a grand scale. It is not intended to be used for individual cases.

A more important factor is the inevitable over-exposure of the nuclear industry used for the discharges from installations.

Even if the cost-benefit analysis is not used, there is a need for a calculation of the costs and benefits of nuclear power. The Application of the Analysis in the Protection of the Consultative Document.

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Veterans of St Cyr recall days when entente was cordiale

From Charles Hargrove
Paris, March 19

It is rare for the chief of the French defence staff, General Raymond Laffont, the chief of the general staff, General Lagarde, and the vice-chief of the general staff, General Bley, to be gathered together under one roof on a social occasion. It is unique for the roof to be that of the British defence attaché in Paris. But, then the occasion tomorrow will be exceptional in every way.

There will be senior officers and their wives, together with the present commander of the military academy of Saint Cyr, and the British Ambassador and Lady Elbherb will sit down to a dinner of Scotch smoked salmon, York ham, Siltoun cheese, and queen's pudding, followed by a glass of champagne, 1975, claret, champagne, and port.

The banquet is to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the passing-out parade at Saint Cyr on March 20, 1940, which was named by the cadets themselves as the promotion *Franco-Britannique*.

Their commanding officer, a retired French colonel, will be in the party, but General Van Heemersch, the commander of the defence attaché with Army and military governor of Strasbourg, who was also a member of this promotion cannot be there.

At last year's anniversary, Brigade Fielow, the British defence attaché with Army and military governor living in the Paris region for a drink at his flat. More than 50 of them, including their wives, turned up.

When a few months ago he approached General Laffont, the chief of the defence staff, and

as such the most senior of all the promotion, with the suggestion of having a commensurate division of senior serving members of the promotion, the general gave his full support.

Lamb will not be on the menu, either figuratively or concretely. The York hams which is as popular on this side of the Channel as on the other, is being deliberately included to avert such gastronomic pitfalls as frogs' legs or *filet de boeuf Wellington*, which a British Army cook, who wanted to do his very best, produced for a similar Franco-British occasion some years ago.

On Sunday, the promotion *Franco-Britannique* is holding other celebrations on the premises of the old military academy of Saint Cyr (which was bombed during the war and transferred to Coëtquidan in Brittany), with a solemn Mass, and a wreath-laying ceremony at the monument to past Saint Cyriens. It will be attended by the British defence attaché.

The promotion *Franco-Britannique* was particularly big, as is the way with wartime passing-out parades—760 instead of the average 400. Forty years later, there are 530 survivors. Those commissioned officers proved particularly lucky, as their number included in their number all the top generals in the French Army today. That is due both to the intrinsic merits of its members, and to the challenge offered to their age group.

It is fortunate, with the political storm now gathering over the Channel, that the much tried *Entente Cordiale* is being commemorated by such men.

From John Earle
Rome, March 19

Signor Francesco Cossiga to-day played out the last scene in the seven-month life of his minority Government with debate in both Houses of Parliament upon the subject of his resignation to President Pertini.

He defended the record of his minority Christian Democratic-Social Democratic and Liberal coalition, but admitted that the country required political stability at home and a reputation for reliability abroad, especially as it at present presides over the European Community.

The Government, the forty-second since the fall of Mussolini in 1945, had lacked a majority in Parliament since the Socialists and Republicans no longer undertook to abstain from voting against it.

It thus lacked the necessary strength to act convincingly of problems ranging from the new outbreak of violence to the worsening economic situation.

Two murders of senior magistrates since Sunday suggest that the law-enforcing authorities are launching with impunity a spring offensive against the administration of justice, a ready one of the more creative pieces of machinery in the structure of Italian society.

On the economic front, Italy faces the highest inflation in Western Europe (2.7 per cent in February, the lira slide that 1,900 lira for £1), and a worsening balance of payments, with a trade deficit of nearly £600m in January.

President Pertini is expected to undertake a round of consultations with political leaders

peace of Munster by which both Spain and the German Empire recognized the Dutch Republic.

From Robert Schull
Amsterdam, March 19

King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia of Spain arrived in Amsterdam today on a three-day state visit to the Netherlands. They were welcomed by Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard.

The Spanish visit is Queen Juliana's last important function before she steps down on April 1 in favor of her eldest daughter, Crown Princess Beatrix.

It is the first Spanish royal visit to the Netherlands since 1549 when Crown Prince Philip, heir to Charles V the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, spent six months touring his father's north European possessions.

This Habsburg prince took over the administration of the Netherlands in 1555, a year before he became King of Spain as Philip II.

The rapid spread of Calvinism in the northern Netherlands (roughly comprising the present Kingdom, as opposed to the area corresponding roughly to Belgium) and opposition by the Dutch of Philip to the iron rule of Philip, a devout Catholic, led in 1568 to the start of an 80-year war.

It ended in 1648 with the

peace of Munster by which both Spain and the German Empire recognized the Dutch Republic.

The revolt against Spain was led by William the Silent, Prince of Orange who was assassinated by a religious fanatic in 1584 in Delft.

By laying a wreath tomorrow morning on his tomb, King Juan Carlos will, as one observer put it, be picking up historical relations where they were broken off.

In terms of modern history, this visit can be considered as the final stage in the re-establishment of friendly relations between the two countries which went at a low level during the era of General Franco.

The King's private relations with the Dutch Royal Family have always been very cordial. As a youngman Prince Juan Carlos spent several holidays at the Dutch royal residence of Soestdijk.

The Dutch Royal Family are also linked to Spain through Queen Juliana's second daughter, Princess Irene, who was born in 1939. Carlos Hugo de Bourbon Parma, the Carlist pretender to the Spanish throne,

From Paris, March 19

L'Aurore, the newspaper nicknamed famous by Georges Clemenceau and Emile Zola, will cease to be anything but a tide page from April 15. From then the inside pages will be identical with those of **Le Figaro**.

The merger—or rather the absorption of **L'Aurore** into **Le Figaro**—has been gradual but inexorable since the beginning of last year. It has been gradual and covers because of the French law making it illegal for any one man to control more than one newspaper.

This has meant that M. Robert Hersant, the proprietor of **Le Figaro** and supporter of President Giscard d'Estaing, has not been able to bring about the merger between the two papers as quickly and as openly as he would have liked.

In November 1978, M. Hersant theoretically withdrew from an agreement to print **L'Aurore** on his presses in the face of union opposition to the move, believed was a mere attempt. Since then, however, the economic difficulties of **L'Aurore** have forced the paper's owners to rely more and more on help from **Le Figaro** material and services.

In November 45 **L'Aurore** journalists were declared redundant and 21 of them subsequently had their notices withdrawn on the order of the Labour Tribunal. In January the old offices were sold and the smaller staff moved into smaller offices. Last month the economic service and foreign service were merged. Now the main news staff is to be absorbed by **Le Figaro**.

tel Spitzer
arch 19:
cretaries-general of the
ies represented in the
e signed an agreement
today to wage a fair
campaign and to re-
gain funds during the
e before the general
ue on October 5.
the first time since
the parties reached
agreement, it restricts
penditure to DM93m
13m) DM40m for the
ocrats, DM36m for
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tist of the West Ger-
entative Churches in
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ils or excessive mud-
an be submitted to the
e board has to meet
e days after receiving
n and take a decision
at week by majority
board's ruling has no
shed at once by the
press services.

Saunders, March 19—A court ruling has reaffirmed the rights of a Belgian television company to broadcast programmes from other countries.

The company, Coditel, complains that consumers to receive Dutch Luxembourg and German channels in local ones.

A consumers group complained that children were misled by advertisements by the foreign channels.

The company said that it is on Belgian television and that film distribution complained that cable was affecting their business.

The court claimed that such action would infringe EEC freedom to provide services, but the European Commission interprets the EEC rules differently.

The court decided yesterday that this was not the case. It will now be up to the courts to make a decision on what to do.

From Our Correspondent
Berlin, March 20

The Hesse branch of the West German printing union, I. G. Druck und Papier Union, announced yesterday that it would appeal against the ruling of a Frankfurt court that the union should pay the DM55,000 (114,500) in damages for printing the trial of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in Neu-Isenburg last April.

A demonstration of about 300 people to protest against the printing was not considered peaceful by the court.

Asked today whether the appeal had been filed, a member of the executive board of the union's Hesse branch said this had not been possible as neither the union nor its lawyer had yet received a copy of the ruling.

He said it was a scandal that the union was informed about the court's decision by the court's spokesman three days ago before the party concerned had even seen it.

Today's request by the union to be given a copy of the court's verdict, the court replied that it could not be found, he said.

ur Own Correspondent
arch 19

50,000 people marched
Paris this morning in
against Government
cut the number of
in schools. The cuts,
by a marked drop in
children due to
birth rates, have pro-
whole range of actions
act of teachers' unions.
a demonstration was
y the teachers in junior
and they have received
cking from parents for
applies which has been
steadily since the cuts
announced earlier this

The cuts in classes have
meant that 390 junior school
and 845 senior school teaching
jobs will have to go, but the
Government argues that the
school population has fallen
by 556,000 over the past five
years and such cuts are there-
fore necessary.

At the same time the Govern-
ment is promising a redistribu-
tion of available jobs so that
the number of teaching posts
available in France will remain
the same.

One reason for the large
number of protest actions now
being called by the five main
teachers' unions is the growing
number of small militant
groups in the unions. The pre-
sent marches and stoppages
form part of a 10-day period
of action which has been called
by the unions to reassert their
authority over their militant

What have the
next 3½ years got
to offer you?

- | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|
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Antarctic
Anti-submarine
Cruisers
Bridge
Watchkeeping
Badminton
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Bunks
Boarding Parties
Challenge
Communications
Comradeship
Clubs
Colours
Computers
Commission
Cricket
Cross Country
Confidence
Dartmouth
Destroyers
Discipline
Diving
Duty-free Drinks
Enjoyment
Etiquette
Exocet | Experience
Expertise
Fishery Protection
Fencing
Fun
Foreign Visits
Friends
Frigates
Flags
Freedom
Flexibility
Fast Patrol Boats
Free Time
Far East
Fitness
Good Food
Good Pay
Golf
Geminis
Guns
High Seas
Helicopter Carriers
Hovercraft
Hockey
Ice Patrol Ship
Ikara
Indian Ocean
Job Satisfaction
Judo
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Pride
Prestige
Pressure
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Radar
Rank | Responsibility
Risk
Rugby
Respect
Sailing
Seamanship
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Six Weeks' Leave
Skiing
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Sonar
Swimming
Sea Cat
Spithead Pheasant
Sea Wolf
Sea Slug
Sea Dart
Sub-Specialisation
Short Career
Soccer
Self Respect
Security
Signals
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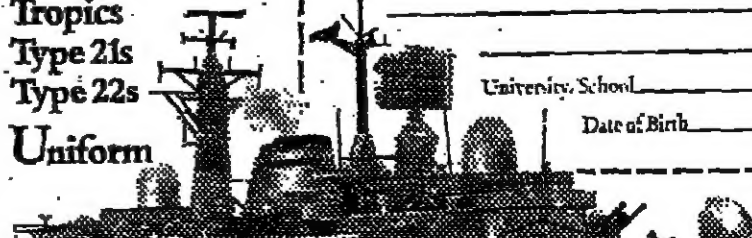
This commission does not apply to Flying Duties, Engineers or Supply and Secretariat Officers.

Name _____ (Captains from U.K. residents only)

Address _____

University, School _____

Date of Birth _____



The Navy's new Short Career Commission

the Appeals Secretary, Room 23
Imperial Cancer Research Fund, PO. Box 123,
Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3PX.

PARLIAMENT, March 19, 1980.

Construction of Channel tunnel a task for private risk capital: state funds ruled out

House of Commons

Public funds would not be made available for a Channel tunnel but there was no reason why private risk capital should not be made available, Mr Norman Fowler, Minister of Transport said.

Mr Leslie Spriggs (St Helens, Lab) had asked for a statement on progress in planning the Channel tunnel.

Mr Fowler (Sutton Coldfield, C)—I have been examining preliminary proposals by British and French Railways for a single track railway Channel tunnel.

More needs to be done before the full implications of the scheme can be judged and variations might offer different advantages. I wait with interest the full proposals which are due to be put to me this summer.

The decision to have a tunnel or any other link across the Channel must first be for the French and ourselves and would need suitable arrangements between the two Governments.

The cost of any scheme would be very large and I should make it clear now that the Government cannot contemplate finding expenditure on this scale from public funds. However, if a scheme is commercially sound I see no reason why private risk capital should not be made available.

I look forward to receiving any specific proposals, including those on which British Rail are working, which would attract genuine risk capital.

Mr Spriggs—Will he give an undertaking that work will commence on a Channel tunnel by 1981 and that once work has commenced on the tunnel, there will be continuity until completion?

Mr Fowler—I cannot give an undertaking of that kind because clearly British Rail have not put forward their proposals and I have not yet decided whether to accept them. The whole purpose of what I am saying is that we first want to see schemes coming forward. They will be examined. They have got to meet the criteria that no public expenditure is available and therefore they must attract private capital.

Mr John Wells (Maidstone, C)—

Will he assure the House that there will be no parliamentary delay? Will he see to it that a simple enabling Bill is brought forward at the earliest opportunity when schemes are prepared?

He has mentioned private risk capital. Can he assure the House that it will be acceptable that there should be some EEC transport infrastructure funds directed in this way?

Mr Fowler—Clearly legislation will be necessary and the House will want to consider it.

We certainly welcome the Commission's initiative in proposing infrastructure aid. Clearly the Channel tunnel is a natural candidate. At this stage no such regulation exists.

Mr Albert Booth, chief Opposition spokesman on transport (Barnes, Labour, Lab)—There is a strange contrast between his refusal to consider transport integration in a national context and his apparent willingness to consider it here in an international context.

The proposal for the present Channel tunnel, limited in scale as it is compared with the previous proposals, could offer a very efficient policy which could lead to freight services across Europe from this country.

Why does he make this transport development, if it is of considerable public advantage, dependent upon private provision? Why does he make it dependent upon private provision?

Mr Fowler—The Labour Government ruled out public expenditure and cancelled the Channel project. For him to come forward with these questions begs the question. We are in a strange position. Given the right scheme, I believe there is a good opportunity for enterprise which could be profitable and also in the national interest. I believe that this proposal will be widely welcomed by the public.

Mr Albert Booth (Folkestone and Hythe, C)—Under previous proposals certain guarantees would be given by the Government on money. Does his announcement preclude any such guarantees?

Mr Fowler—We are clearly looking for genuine private risk capital but I do not preclude some consideration of guarantees.

Mr Eric Ogden (Liverpool, West Derby, Lab)—We have the British machinery for boring and British Rail, freight users and passengers who want to see it. The cost would be less than one jumbo jet over the whole period of the tunnel.

Will he give approval in principle? If others outside find the money, can we go ahead?

Mr Fowler—I thought I made it clear that provided the details are right—and that is the whole point of what we are saying—then clearly there is a good opportunity and prospect that the tunnel can go ahead.

British Rail have not yet provided the details of the complete scheme. I would have thought he would have interpreted my statement as being more hopeful than he got from Labour ministers.

Mr Alan Clark (Plymouth, Sussex, C)—There is a strong political element in this project whose purpose is to tie us closely with the European Community. Will he deny reports that he is under strong pressure from interests in the Community to approve this project?

Mr Fowler—I am under no particular pressure. There has been a growth of traffic across the Channel and there is likely to be future growth. I am not under any pressure to approve this project.

Mr Phillip Whitehead (Derby, North, Lab)—Would he confirm that nothing he has so far seen in the various studies is seriously concerned with the Channel tunnel? Is it a matter of time before the details are right and there is the right scheme, be the sensible way of meeting this public need?

Mr Fowler—None of the reports that have come to me contradict the impression that the British Rail scheme under their assessments could be viable.

Mr David White (Walsall, North, Lab) who first raised the matter on Tuesday—Clearly, arising from the press article, the matter needed to be looked into. Can we take it no longer to the House? The matter was made by the senior officials of the Ministry of Defence regarding the Channel tunnel.

The Speaker said—The House has been given complete assurances by the Minister of Transport that there was no pressure and the House should accept that statement.

Minister surprised at success of Olympics meeting

More progress and more suggestions on an alternative post-Olympic Games had been made at the 12-nation meeting in Geneva than he had originally expected, Mr Douglas Hurd, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, told MPs.

Mr Hurd—The 12-nation meeting in Geneva was a success. It was a success in that it was the first time since the 1976 Olympic Games that the 12-nation meeting in Geneva was a success.

Mr Douglas Hurd—Representatives of 12 countries met in Geneva on March 17 and 18 to discuss the possibility of arranging competitions of high quality, primarily for athletes who stayed away from the Moscow Olympics. Useful progress was made in the meeting.

Mr Hurd—First of all we have to be realistic. It is not a simple matter to arrange a competition of this kind. It is not a simple matter to arrange a competition of this kind. It is not a simple matter to arrange a competition of this kind.

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Stepney and Poplar, Lab)—This meeting in Geneva was always somewhat mysterious and the House is not much clearer about its scope or what came out of it as a result of its statement. What has been the response so far of the national Olympic committees in the countries represented at Geneva to the request that they should not attend the Olympic Games?

Mr Hurd—The 12 countries that attended were a group which had met quietly for some time to discuss these matters. This meeting was held in a place of privacy and I do not think there is any particular mystery about it.

Some of the countries represented in Geneva have not yet come out in favour of a boycott. There are a large number of countries who are sitting on the fence and have not made a decision. They will make their decisions in the next few weeks.

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clear that his journey was necessary and he has been better off at home.

Mr Hurd—I did not go to Geneva with a view to making a decision on the Olympic Games. I went to Geneva to discuss the possibility of arranging competitions of high quality, primarily for athletes who stayed away from the Moscow Olympics.

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Avoiding another Southend by-election

The Minister of State for the Civil Service was asked to equip the Cabinet with bicycles and to encourage the Civil Service also to use them in the inner urban areas, Mr Paul Channon, Minister of State, Civil Service Department, said.

Mr Sydney Chapman (Barnet, Chipping Barnet, C)—Will the Minister confirm that the annual revenue of the Civil Service is running at £11.5 per cent?

Mr Channon—If that figure is correct, it is not true that the number of non-industrial civil servants can be reduced substantially without in any way causing redundancies or forced resignations.

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Minister hopes to reduce Civil Service without redundancies

The Government hoped to achieve its target of reducing the Civil Service by 1,000 extra social security workers but the staff on the main general practice staff on the Civil Service is being seriously reduced.

Mr Channon—I am sure that the House would wish to have fewer people involved in both inland Revenue and social security.

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Little objection to tachographs

In practice there was little objection or complaint coming forward about the steady introduction of the tachograph into Britain, Mr Kenneth Grant, Minister of Transport, said.

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More post offices for licences

About 1,000 more post offices to be authorised to hand mail, Mr Norman Fowler, Minister of Transport, said.

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Mr

New Books

Combining away

A. Screech

(p. 35)

he was first by the French and Hugo credited the artistic discovery of the undergraduate taguel first came to did not, like his Garapa, lean upon the Notre Dame and piss assembled populace nor did he purloin h bells for his horse's or even bandy dog l pork sausages with from the Sorbonne, in the proceeded eminent degree of the great scholastic Saint Victor, and the magnificent catalogue of volumes found (among such The Cardinal's Bat, ste Petendi, On the Practice of Playing id The Kettle of Mag- the following thesis: the following thesis: a Chimera, Bombina Vacuum, can be on Second In- brings us to Professor book. Here is a most nd extensive study, acclaimed aim is "to elais more accessible der public, without readers in a mass of annotations". The some quarter of a on (excluding foot- has an illustration al bibliography (no

mention, say, of the work of John Cowper Powys, Northrop Frye, or Jean-Louis Barraud), and its price is the approximate equivalent of fifteen Penguin Rabelais plus a good bottle of Chateau rouge. Professor Screech's method is to proceed chronologically through Rabelais' four main books, omitting nearly all biographical detail or narrative summary, and concentrating almost exclusively on the minutiae of the political, philosophical and especially bibliographical back ground. The deadening, virtually humourless effect is difficult to characterize fairly. The incident of the bells takes 11 pages to elucidate. For Rabelais' "linguistic comedy" in the *Quart Livre*, the reader is advised to consult Aristotle On Interpretation, then, "if his Latin is good enough", to read the commentaries of Ammonius Hermeneus and Aquinas, and follow this up "with those of two Renaissance scholars, Rosario and Nifo". A little later, drawing pause for breath, he remarks that "it would be a mistake to try to turn Rabelais into a neo-Crautist Heretic, and the magnificent catalogue of volumes found (among such The Cardinal's Bat, ste Petendi, On the Practice of Playing id The Kettle of Mag- the following thesis: the following thesis: a Chimera, Bombina Vacuum, can be on Second In-

Rabelais' feminism, and the idea of Christian Comedy, into the present work, almost submerged in the scholarship is a marvelously sympathetic re-interpretation of the figure of Pantagruel, developing from the "amoral and boisterous giant of the early Chronicles", through to the ideal of a philosopher-prince, "mystically specious, capable of seeing beyond the flux", and becoming at the end of the *Quart Livre* a kind of noble, smiling, Bacchic Socrates. He can also be splendidly down-to-earth (or dung), when he gives himself a moment, remarking of Panurge's supposed final dismissal (like Falstaff in *Henry IV*, Part 2) that "a man who can find 16 ways of naming shit, some of them very erudite, is neither reformed nor definitively cleansed".

But it is intended to suggest that something has gone amiss in the groves of modern Academe. We seem to be in danger of losing the growing specialization of literary scholarship, and the mechanics of the literary book-trade, of fatally losing touch with the original spirit and energy of our great early classics. We seem to be creating a Vacuum around them, exactly like the dusty denizens of the Library of Saint Victor. That such a book could seriously be intended, either by author or publisher, to make Maistre Francois more accessible is astonishing. Erasmus, Thomas More, Rabelais, Montaigne: what did they stand for? Surely the great impulse of Humanism, that knowledge should be made easily available, that scholars should be free to share their knowledge, that should bring joy—the "gaia scienza". Alors, heuons!

Richard Holmes

cycling around Britain

enties man Shrapnel

(p. 50)

enties

stopher Booker

(p. 50)

struckers on Kingston Bridge rubbing shoulders with Mrs Whitehouse catching a cream cake in Sydney, it is mostly news from home which caught his eye.

Although granted the benefit of hindsight, he does not venture quick or daring judgments and his even-handedness leads him sometimes to lose sight of priorities. The Protestant workers' strike in Ulster, the most sinister piece of civil disobedience of the decade which wrecked the bipartisan power-sharing approach and won direct rule within 10 days is treated as lightly as the play-legged death of Victor the giraffe.

Shrapnel puts forward only general themes by which to judge the seventies: the reversion to natural methods and staying healthy; the howls against sexism and racialism; the suspension of meritocratic progress; the arrival of reaction as at first a fashionable, then a respectable stance.

As an example of the latter he might have chosen Christopher Booker, the first editor of *Private Eye*, that scurrilous organ run by young fogies, who was elevated to the col-

umns of the nation's leading Conservative daily and those of the main Conservative weekly. Taking the eco-movement at its word, Booker has recycled the wisdom which he imparted there during the seventies and, without self-referentialism, presents them for reconsideration.

He does not share Shrapnel's modest reticence. To Booker, all events are but evidence to back his thesis that the goal of progress for its own sake has at last been jettisoned and that the past 10 years have shown the happy and just discrediting of all those who dared speak of change as if good could come of it.

His arguments are forever plausible, never quite sounding ridiculous, never quite taking everything into account when more information might encourage a less clear-cut conclusion. For Booker is a representative of the populist philosophers who rose during the seventies to give easy explanations of complicated matters.

He maintains a dignified face most of the time, but every now and then he reveals his dour side. More than once he suggests that the optimism of a decade can best be judged by the length of women's skirts. And the editor who brought Pseud's Corner into the world unblushingly writes: "In psychological terms, regardless of our sex, we all have four main psychic functions, two 'masculine' and two 'feminine'."

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The new novel by
GRAHAM GREENE
Doctor Fischer
of Geneva

or The Bomb Party
will be published on March 27
Bodley Head £4.50

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Aristotle, Conan Doyle, Oscar Wilde, and
try Shelley launch a brand-new paperback
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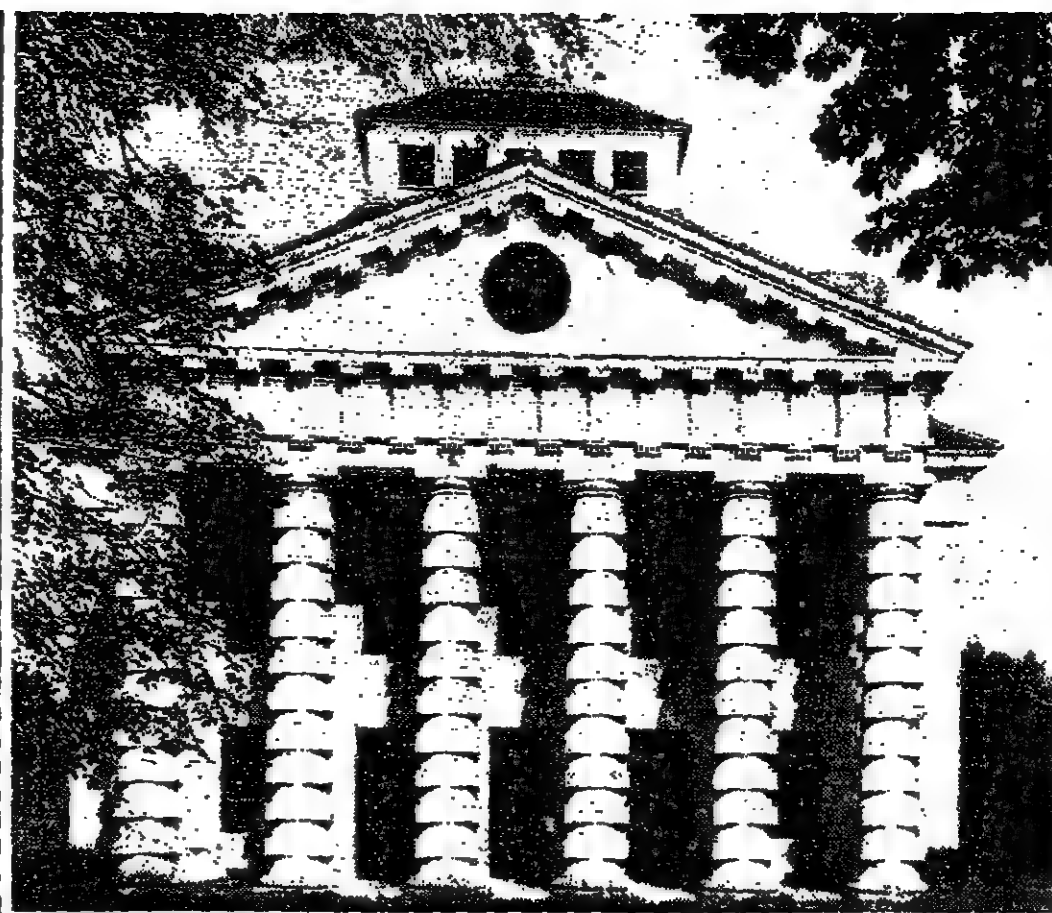
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Isaiah Berlin, David Lodge, John Bayley,
and other leading writers

and Prejudice, Anna Karenina, The Warden,
lock Holmes and Frankenstein are among
the first twelve, now at your bookshop

ng soon: Max Beerbohm, Leonardo da Vinci,
the Brontë, Edgar Allan Poe—and many more

Oxford University Press



The house of the Director of the saltworks, by Ledoux

The ambivalent Utopia

The Architecture of the
French Enlightenment

By Allan Braham

(Thames and Hudson, £25)

Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (1735-1805) designed a remarkable variety of buildings and projects from town houses for the rich to a monopoly State salt works and the Barrière d'Enfer on the southern edge of Paris, perhaps more familiar as the setting for the third act of Puccini's *La Bohème*. Ledoux is much the most original and, outside France, best known of the architects in Allan Braham's handsome and scholarly new book, but even he could hardly be described as a household word.

So little of his work survives. Only six of more than 50 tax-collecting *barrières*, described by some justice by Mr Braham as an accomplishment whose diversity may be compared with the City churches of Christopher Wren, are still standing. The paradox by which they combined great artistic freedom with the received power of ordered stone was recognized from the start: the Revolution destroyed them as images of the ancien régime; the Second Empire because, in the flattening and pushy world of the 1860s, they were simply in the way. Poignantly, it was possible, then, to photograph them before demolition.

The salt works, laid out as a geometrical crescent in the forests of Franche-Comté, offer the perfect eighteenth century combination of rationality, mysticism and force: the line of the buildings on the ground

emulates the arc of the sun across the sky yet, as Mr Braham reminds us, the salt trade was grim, the tax was universal and heavy, and illicit distillation could be punished by death. State security was the first requirement in the ideal kingdom of the gabelle.

As the response to Ledoux's unique originality, and even to the megalopolian projections of his contemporary Boullée, whose huge spherical cenotaph to the memory of Isaac Newton has become a comparatively familiar image in recent years—because it is easy to tire of beautiful French manners and perfect taste: it is hard, for example, for the layman to respond with much enthusiasm to the river frontage of Antoine's Hôtel des Monnaies (1768-75), facing the Louvre, or to recognize clearly all the refinements of taste and change indicated.

"Enlightenment" is taken to mean not merely the age of Diderot, Rousseau and Voltaire who, indeed, scarcely occur in the book at all since, as Mr Braham points out, philosophers were generally writing, editing or hiding, and rarely possessed the resources to commission buildings on any scale—but also, and chiefly, the years from the ascendancy of Pompadour and her brother, Marie, in the 1740s and 50s, to the Revolution itself. It is defined, broadly, as an age of superlative professionalism, founded on the official state training system in Paris and Rome, and responding with increasing individualism to the rediscovery of the Ancient World and to the huge, slow but irresistible changes in contemporary social, economic and intellectual life.

Freemasonry mulched the heavy soil of French society

just beneath the surface, facilitating the spread of egalitarianism which, in the democratization of theatre seating, it appears frivolous today, was also responsible for improving conditions by revolutionary design, for surgeons, prisoners and the public distribution of grain. The new roads and bridges of eighteenth-century France were the finest in Europe.

French classicism prevailed, but Mr Braham divides it into two which derived continuously from the age of Louis XIV and the Renaissance—Gabriel's Place de la Concorde, Petit Trianon and Ecole Militaire—and that which evidently reflected the enlightenment of the age: the monumental church of St Geneviève, Jacques-Germain Soufflot's synthesis of Gothic and Greek, progressively neutered since becoming the Pantheon in 1797; Victor Louis's glorious Grand-Théâtre in Bordeaux; and, most highly regarded next to St Geneviève in the Paris of the time, the Ecole de Chirurgie by Jacques Gondoin.

Gondoin designed his anatomy theatre after the Pantheon in Rome; a court lay in front of it, and between the court and the street a screen of columns with rooms above. Freestanding columns were the greatest joy of the age, for nothing conveyed both a cautioning magnificence and theatrical access at one and the same time so well. The director of Ledoux's salt-works got them too, but his are heavily banded, like a bristling monster of the state, and the windows behind them are dark. Utopia was ambivalent.

Michael Ratcliffe

and self-obsessed. The celebrated morality, a morbid finicky justification of trivial whims. Mr Rohmer states: "In my moral tales, there is no moral message. These people—my characters—determine their own way." It is tempting to believe, on this evidence, that the French conduct their lives as they do their vehicles—in the moral certainty of *priorité à moi*.

Dirk Bogarde's publishers somewhat anxiously point out that he does not sit in judgement upon characters or events. This is accurate: but Mr Bogarde's accuracy of moral ironies saves the reader in no doubt about his genuine decency and compassion. A *Gentle Occupation* is set on an Indonesian island where British troops are cleaning up after the German occupation, while the mixed local population tries to recover. Various motivated terrorists are waging a cruel campaign against restored colonial rule.

Mr Bogarde achieves a marvellous balance, in which the experience of one character is reflected in the experience of another. Events which are radically different cause delight or anguish and confusion in the lives of people thrown together in circumstances of moral uncertainty. The characters would have been eager to escape. With considerable skill, Mr Bogarde presents the sapient and pitiless saviour Miss Porro with her jolly bully of a General, the uncertainties of Rooke (a British officer) and Ennis (an understandingly cautious Eurasian); the bland homosexual adventuring of Major Nettles—who proves to be loyal, efficient and self-aware; the rough-and-ready friendship of a plain nurse and an inhibited martinet. Most important is the moral, sensitive and moving relationship between Pullen and Clair, the Dutch mother whose husband is called back from the living death of a prison camp. All Mr Bogarde's characters are victims of ordinary passions, commonplace prejudice, normal pride. In wartime.

The dialogue is excellent and destroy the western paradise of crowing Chaucerian and sends his minion Cockatrice the one-eyed, supported by a monstrous regiment of black Basilisks, to perform the coup. There follow breath-taking combats, heart-breaking love scenes, and head-shaking philosophizing (mostly hems-furrowing, with a cast of thousands—including a squadron of mosquitoes each called Scarce; and a Weasel with Mafia tendencies. Mr Wangerin, a children's author from Oregon, had great success with this kind of fantasy in America; though readers nurtured on *Watership Down* rather than *J. R. R. Tolkien's* *Seagull* will find his style a slightly uncomfortable mix of the Biblical and the Whimsical. There is also a marvellous antihero, a mournful mongrel called Mondo Cami Dog (Brooklyn Jewish antecedents, I should guess, whose noble nose may class as the Full Supporting Feature.

the organization of the novel cleverly. Mr Bogarde is determined to surprise as often as possible. The frequent flash-backs are handled, on the whole, with assurance and variety of narrative style; and in one or two brief passages of modified interior monologue, Mr Bogarde promises even more accomplished fiction.

Peter Warden, the focal character in James McConkey's *The Tree House Confessions*, experiences a moment of blinding revelation at the bedside of his dying mother. He retreats, for some time, to the tree house which he built for his son, who was killed in a street accident, to think. The result of his reflection is a set of confessions, prefaced by a moving letter of love, offered to his second wife.

It is a superb achievement. Mr McConkey examines a child's growing awareness of things and people around him: a son's relationship with his parents and his increasing understanding of their own involvement with one another and with other people; then eventually a man's incomplete appreciation of himself and those he loves. Peter Warden must come to terms with his father's desertion of his family, but also with the terrible moments when his first wife and his son ran from him: the young woman into a drifting limbo the boy to his death.

Mr McConkey refers frequently to Augustine. The parallels are sometimes evident, sometimes more subtle. The same remorseless, even fervent, honesty prevails. Towards the end of the novel, Warden says that there has been nothing extraordinary in the story so far. No; except that it has been told with perception, moral authority and a truly sensitive consideration for other people, in beautiful, well-considered prose. It may be that the author was only preparing his readers for the brilliant, perplexing and searching pages to come. For many readers *The Tree House Confessions* will be as disquieting as they are richly rewarding.

Stuart Evans

Ruling class

Nellie

Letters from Africa

By Elspeth Huxley

(Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £8.95)

One winter day in the heyday of the British Empire the Honourable Nellie Grant, daughter of Lord Richard de Aquila Grosvenor and niece to the first Duke of Westminster, set off with her charming but ineffectual husband Jos to start a new life in Kenya. Fifty years later she came home to Europe again an octogenarian widow, virtually penniless and bringing with her in three old wooden boxes all her worldly possessions.

Almost everything she had done in Africa had, in one sense or another, failed. The colonial idea had disintegrated around her, and the very values that sustained her were discredited. Yet so merry, inquisitive and endlessly enterprising was her nature that seen from a distance, from beyond the frontiers of that lost empire, her life on the farmlands of Thika and Njoro seems nothing less than a triumph.

Nellie tells the story blow by blow, from the first offer of a farm from a man in an Old Etonian tie in the bar of the Norfolk Hotel, Nairobi, in 1912 to the handover of the last holdings (sale price, £1,000) to faithful Kikuyu retainers in 1964. Half the book consists of Nellie's own letters to her daughter Elspeth Huxley, the other half of Mrs Huxley's loving but by no means sentimental memoir of her mother, and the fascination of the work lies in its brilliant interlarding with the minutiae of colonial life as they happened, day by day, horse-sickness to Flower Show, female polo to Mau Mau murder, illuminated always by the prejudices, fantasies and all too often impracticable notions of the irrepressible Mrs Grant.

She was a witty and highly original woman and she also evidently possessed the streak of the implacable that built the empire and made the English ruling classes what they used to

be. Soft-hearted about animals, open-minded about human relationships, she was nevertheless an imperious driving force. She had to be. Even before his death in 1947 Jos seems generally to have been away from home, embarking upon one or another unsuccessful business enterprise.

There was nothing she would not try. She bred rabbits, hens, cattle, pigs, sheep and Colorado worms. She grew almonds, maize, mushrooms and pyrethrum, from which insecticide is made. She canned vegetables. She spun wool. At 73 she wildly contracted to supply an Indian grocer in Mombasa with 100 lb of cauliflower and 50 lb of Brussels sprouts a day—all very exciting, an sowing seeds madly and making plans. Nothing prospered for long (the grocer's first cheque bounced) but though her letters are full of disasters petty or appalling, her spirits remained dazzlingly high.

High-spiritedness, of course, was a hallmark of colonial Kenya, and Nellie faithfully reflects the mingled vivacity, vulgarity, and courage of its European society. If the very presence of such a community in black Africa seems distasteful in the 1980s, to Nellie and her friends it was part of empire's natural order. Her letters never lost their fizz, but they perceptibly saddened as independence approached, as one by one her white neighbours packed their trophies, sold their beloved farms and sailed away. Nellie herself retired to Portugal, where she experimented with such a community in black Africa seems distasteful in the 1980s, to Nellie and her friends it was part of empire's natural order. Her letters never lost their fizz, but they perceptibly saddened as independence approached, as one by one her white neighbours packed their trophies, sold their beloved farms and sailed away. 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sion

Raquin

Ratcliffe

thrashing above the aurent and Thérèse, and Camille out of the river on mer's afternoon, the pass a year of portability and waiting iriving that others, suggest they get mar- 1 then, "no looking, z".

at moment arrives. kes Thérèse kiss the neck made by the smile; she spits her fire. Camille's res from the wall; m take it down. blackened cadaver the marriage bed, and lewd, Laurent room. Thérèse stays r. The cat comes in, aurent in a distinctly way. The night head.

ble with Zola's melo- at it offers the plot deau farce with a ness approaching the. "She needs to move at a bit, get herself used Madame Raquin ally as Laurent was t again, to make love loved Thérèse; but

Reynolds

s ago, when Alan first play, *Fat 1 the Last 26*, was Hampstead, one Sun- aper critic said how spool was to have ale living in it. Now, and 10 plays later, s still living in Liver- pool along with the North knows how s; but London has notice of the play- 1 that first play was n the South. Bring- ale the man, if not to a wider audience director Richard tection and it made areating 35 minutes s Arena last night. e lots of excerpts dle's plays and the self, shaking off his ness, spoke very out his work.

's plays are comedies n Liverpool humour s the most discing- about them is that about work. *Fat*

Church

g to make it excel- v long to make an Right, make an ger Corman's young re full of the wit m of Roger Corman, of fast films to the eneration.

ector of *Night-Cull* called his inaugural

MEDY REALLY TH SEEING... ARKLING

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ZOR SHARP - DY THRILLER"

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even here it was hard to detect a leavening of irony in Stanou Langton's direction or Philip Mackie's script, although Mona Washbourne's performance hinted there might indeed be irony around.

Yes, it is well done. I like the desolate haunting score of Patrick Gowers—real film music which supports the action and lifts it from one point to the next when camera alone is not enough—and I like David Myerscough-Jones's Passage du Pont-Neuf, all acrid crows and leaded rain, still more his reconstruction of the Paris Morgue, where pitiful corpses laid out on porgatorial slabs endured from the visiting public every kind of emotion from sexual excitement to nausea, giggling and grief.

The acting is fine. Kate Nelligan's Thérèse, released from an inhibited adolescence in episode one, sustained a warm-blooded austerity through episode two, and Brian Cox makes Laurent an average sensual man of some charm. It is not their fault but Zola's that neither of the chief characters transcends heavy-breathing to become anything very positive and the rest are simply stupid. It might have been more rewarding to see Jonathan Powell producing a more adventurous choice of nineteenth-century subject—*Pontane's Fifth Priest*, for example, or *Erin's Frame*, or the final *Scènes de la Bohème*. The talents are all here.

Harold for example was about a bus driver and Bleasdale had himself been a ticket collector. *Down the Dock Road* was about ducks based on Bleasdale's own experience as a security guard on Liverpool docks. This knowing about the work involved in his plays gives a very realistic background to his humour.

He had, we learned, no personal experience for *The Black Stuff*, his television comedy about a terror gang. But he said all his wife's uncles and cousins were in the business and Bleasdale was in it now as well. With the money he got from the play he set his in-laws up in the tarmac business with Bleasdale doing the clerical side.

At one time Bleasdale had the most famous voice on Merseyside. For four years he read his Freany Scully stories on Radio City and they were, surprisingly enough, the most popular programme on the radio. Bleasdale has also written two Scully novels but he has given up the job as the strivelling radio disc-jockey. With all this success in the North Bleasdale does not seem worried about being ignored by London. But London perhaps should be a little worried about it.

briefing: "Frontal nudity from the waist up, total nudity from behind, and no pubic hair. Oh, and I want the title somewhere in the script." Another director recalled Corman's pencilled question: "Breast nudity possible here?" He replied, "Yes, Roger, indeed it is, and, thus, put right with God, went on to inject some 'profound social observation' about illegal abortions into the final product. Action, humour, sex, there must be, but the 'theme', it seems, is negotiable.

Exactly how negotiable was not made very clear in Tuesday's enthusiastic broadcast of *Omibus Film*. Corman's laugh is quieter than the scratch of his pencil and it seems that the busy sound of the latter during a viewing session can send all but the bravest protégés running to the lavatory.

What did come over clearly was Corman's singular importance as a lone, if unhealthy, large, independent force in the American film industry. In a sense he represents a return to Hollywood's origins: recycling sets and actors, making five-day films and two-day films, spotting bright young men in the trailer department to give them a break. They're cheap, and they may be good. Much of what he has made, and they now make, is rubbish (if also, like *Apocalypse Now*, gargantuan, over-wise, rubbish). But joyfully prolific bad taste can have a very fertilizing effect. We have Corman to thank for the films of Martin Scorsese, and also for the incidental championing of Truffaut and Fellini.

On Tuesday the BBC produced yet another rambling clash with Thames' *Hollywood* in the form of an excellent *Yesterday's Witness* film about William Randolph Hearst's 30-year affair with Marion Davies, the former chorus girl. As one of the extant witnesses put it, she always remained a chorus girl at heart, but the romance was much happier than most marriages.

Hearst may have been a successful journalist but, in the words of the eternally chic Anita Loos, he "wasn't very bright". Frédéric Raphael, visiting Cambridge in *Writers and Places* (BBC 2), was very bright indeed. How does a man of such exquisite civilization write plays of such remorseless superficiality? Too easily, alas.

Das Rheingold Festival Hall

Stanley Sadie

It was no "bleeding chunk" of Wagner that the LPO offered at the Festival Hall on Tuesday but an entire carcass: and no less a chief d'orchestre served it up than Sir George Solti. It is a long, long piece. Sir George has conducted a Wagner opera in his great days as chief Wagner interpreter in London were the 1960s, with the Covent Garden production—which in our innocence we

Benton: the reluctant director's way to the stars

London is an important city in the career of Robert Benton. When he was here in 1977 to attend the British premiere of his second film, *The Late Show*, he arrived at Leicester Square to find it crowded. He thought his film was a surprise hit. But the queues were there to see the stars arrive for the royal film performance. It was during the same stay that he was asked to direct *Kramer vs Kramer*, which was chosen for this week's royal performance.

Robert Benton also wrote the script for *Kramer*, as he has done the screenplays of his two other films. He is less a frustrated writer than a reluctant director. "I know that one of my great weaknesses as a director is that I try to write my way out of trouble rather than direct my way out of it. I think the script is the guts of a film. One of the problems with American films now is that there are no great screenwriters. I suppose it is a result of the auteur theory. Every one wants to direct. I didn't want to direct until I had done it. And if someone said to me tomorrow you cannot direct, but they allowed me to write what I wanted, I would be very happy."

David Newman, my partner, came in New York and we wanted to write movies. We wrote a script, *Bonnie and Clyde*, and in four years it was turned down by every studio in Hollywood. Truffaut was going to do it at one time. Warren Beatty finally bought it, the picture worked and we were offered a contract at Warners to be screenwriters. I remember thinking that that was all I ever wanted.

"We wrote the script for *There Was a Crooked Man*, which was directed by Joe Mankiewicz, and we saw it all

being made. We fell in love with making films. David said he wanted to break our contract and direct pictures. There was a row which lasted three days. I am not one given to temper, but there is a filing cabinet in our office with a dent in it which I kicked in. David eventually won and, in order for me to save some kind of face I said all right, but if you direct, I am going to direct. I didn't want to. We agreed to write two scripts. He would direct one and I would direct the other. By accident the studio chose the one I was going to direct. I honestly believe that if they had got me alone I wouldn't have directed it. But as David was at the meeting I said, of course I have to direct it."

As far as Benton was concerned, the experience was a great success. He found directing *Bad Company*, a western, totally exhilarating. But audiences were not impressed, nor were the critics. The film lost money. "It took me five years to do another film. David and I did screenplays together during the day and at night I was writing *The Late Show* by myself. During those five years we wrote 15 screenplays, of which only five were made. I used to start writing when our son woke up at about eight until 11.30 or 12 at night. *The Late Show* took about three years to write. I am a very slow writer. I write by hand. I can't think straight onto the typewriter. At one point, I was about to go with my family on vacation and I said either I do it or I give it up. So they went away for two weeks and I forced myself to finish it."

The *Late Show* was a critical success, a twist on the private eye genre whereby the Marlowe/Spade character had grown to old age. Art Carney plays the dated detective who searches for Lily Tomlin's cat until it leads him to murder.



Robert Benton with Meryl Streep on the set of *Kramer vs Kramer*

Although proud of it as the film which proved his competence and fortified his confidence, Benton judges it as a writer.

"The *Late Show* is the worst plotted film in history. When Howard Hawks did *The Big Sleep*, everyone said the plot doesn't make sense. As a result of that, there is a lot of lazy writing today. In *The Late Show*, anybody who is killed is anyone you know. The action takes place off screen by people who you don't know. I wouldn't care, but it is destructive to the film. The plot sets in the way of the two main parts. The film to a great extent was about my

father, a man of tremendous courage who died because he was too scared to have an operation on his stomach."

The film was produced by Robert Altman, who keeps his regular team of technicians intact when he is not working for his proteges. "I went to see Altman. I was very nervous. He has this reputation for being an improvisational director. The first time I met him I said, I am a writer. I do not improvise. He turned to me and said: 'I do not improvise. I just rewrite a little later than you do.' I learned how to live with actors from Altman. As a

writer, they were always people who screwed up my lines. But he explained that you can't expect an actor to tell lies for you unless the lines are convincing."

His success with *The Late Show* made him an eligible property and, when François Truffaut backed out, he was asked to make *Kramer vs Kramer*, an emotional story about divorced parents who battle over the custody of their six-year-old son. "Part of the reason for *Kramer* is that my wife and I have a son who is 14 next month. When you have children who reach a certain age, you can see how soon they

are going to leave you. Many times when he was a child I took him for granted, most of all in day-to-day living: walking him to school, sitting in the playground. I use the same playground in the film which I took my son to, the same hospital where my son had his head stitched up. The apartment we used was two blocks from where we live."

He had to guide and direct Meryl Streep as the mother, Justin Henry, the boy, and Dustin Hoffman as the father, an actor who has a reputation for being difficult to work with. Benton did not find him troublesome. "Once a film is being made, there is a momentum to continue working, whether the picture is going well or badly. Everyone wants to keep working. Keep the momentum going."

The reason that Dustin is valuable is because he can see when something is false and he is brave enough to stand up and say it is false, stop the machine. And everyone on the set says, why is this person creating such a scene? People say Dustin is badly behaved because they become overwhelmed by that momentum."

Hoffman has taught Benton a lot about acting and was particularly helpful in coaching a good performance out of the boy. When the child has to cry on cue, he did it in one take and brought a round of applause from the crew. Benton is also full of praise for Meryl Streep, who, he believes, deserves her recent exalted status. But for Benton, as important as the acting and the direction was the script, which he wrote and rewrote. "I wrote 20 drafts for *Kramer*, to the extent that, at one stage, the novelist, Avery Corman, said that I had written more drafts of the screenplay than he had of the novel."

Nicholas Wapshott



Prunella Scales and Leonard Rossiter

Photograph by Donald Cooper

A kaleidoscope of feelings

Make and Break

Lytic. Hammersmith

Ned Chaillet

In his novels, which are models of observation and imagination, Michael Frayn has always reached more deeply into his characters than the conventions of the theatre usually allow on stage. In the books the sparkle of the dialogue is set in clear, descriptive prose that can wait the reader into a very modern kingdom of heaven or into the claustrophobic future. On the stage Mr Frayn has been reluctant to entrust that dimension to a director's hands and he has usually opted for the safer kind of reality, a world contained by his dialogue.

There are glorious signs in *Make and Break* that Mr Frayn is willing to embrace a more dazzling stagecraft, and with his usual display of wit he now offers sharp, kaleidoscopic insights into feelings and even attempts an interior look at the moment of dying. It is not an attempt that he makes quite by himself, and a less confident director than Michael Blake more might have been tempted to cheat on the score and voice of these moments, perhaps arguing that nearly three hours of performance is too long. Instead he turns those

moments into tightly choreographed triumphs of acting, movement and stage design.

It is all set safely enough in a recognizable world. High in a hotel in Frankfurt, in a suite given over to a display of movable British walls, he looks at the business of building and trading. Opening as he means to go on—with three salaried, a torrent of words and the displayed walls and doors falling open and forming new shapes for the benefit of three customers—he narrows the interest down to the entrance of John Garrard, a hyperactive, unstoppable salesman.

Although Mr Blake's casting has that sense of rightness that could lead his company into being mistaken for the characters they play, and they are given funny lines with abandon, Leonard Rossiter manages to earn his entrance with a performance that knocks the settled habits of his television success to pieces, and keeps him the centre of attention.

His Garrard is a businessman with a sense of competition so heightened that he cannot enter a doorway without clambering on a chair to discover who is unfastened the door. He exists only as a salesman, questioning people cleverly, but almost unconsciously, about their innermost desires as if he

were shaking their hands. Even while seducing the adoring secretary, so wisely portrayed by Prunella Scales, he is sure to examine her shoe for its label. Inquire about her arrangements with her lover and ask her for a lesson on Buddhism, never forgetting that his key to a breakthrough into the Eastern European market nestles in her handbag.

Bombs may shake the hotel, and they do, death may come calling, and it does, but while all his hissing and voicing what he thinks motivates him, knowing that it is not money, or the love of work, he rolls relentlessly forward like a human juggernaut.

There are subtleties of performance catered generally through the supporting roles with James Groux exacting the long-suffering partner whose love for Garrard is as complete as his superior moral sense will allow, and Anthony Royle has the crushed bantam spirit of a once-worthy companion. Framed effectively by Michael Annals's set, which echoes the elegant mouldings of the Lyric Theatre itself to convey a sense of the hotel's luxury, it is a production that finally and firmly shows the Lyric back on the maps of serious theatregoers. It is good that Mr Blake, a new resident director, has returned so strongly to a London theatre.

London Sinfonietta St John's

Paul Griffiths

Discounting Hans-Jürgen von Bose's *Travesties* in *Sad Landscape*, as is eminently possible, everything was vocal in Tuesday's final concert in the London Sinfonietta's anthology of music since 1945. Obviously Cage could not be ignored in such a series, but to represent him by his Aria for solo voice was merely a genial joke with no serious point of view. Never mind, Linda Hirst gave her circus-turn performance, complete with bangles, tight and funny voices, doing it so well that she justly won laughter all the way through.

After this superb display of vocal gymnastics Vivien Town-

ley's careful clamber over the obstacles of Elliott Carter's *A Mirror on which to Dwell* was bound to seem the more mannered, not to say absurd. For that I am inclined to blame the work, which is not so much a set of songs as an exercise in song settings, all very elaborately wrought but entirely neglectful of the need to marry word and sound, or at least make their divorce meaningful.

Certainly Miss Townley had that look of alarm which betokens a singer's knowledge that rhythms and intervals have to be worked at but even a fully secure performance could not hide the work's awkwardness and its still more damaging exaggeration of what glints playful and ironic on the surface of Elizabeth Bishop's verse. Except in the second song, where cello and double bass made porridge of the grave counterpoints, I would have

been happy to hear only the accompaniment, whose looped traceries were being neatly woven under Antony Pay.

If the two Americans were both represented at less than their best in this programme, there was some recompense in the interval when the single work was one of Henze's finest, his *Kammermusik* 1952. Contemplating the Grecian dream world of Hölderlin, Henze responds with such a generous abundance of lyricism that one hardly minds the poet's purity being compromised by ease and languor.

And when the tenor solo is sung with such rapt beauty as Philip Langridge brought to it on this occasion, when the guitar obbligato gains the delicate phrasing of Timothy Walker, when the oboe is blended into such euphony, the work really does begin to climb into its own wide blue yonder.

Mazeppa

Logan Hall

William Mann

Tchaikovsky excused his penchant for writing operas with the argument that "an opera may be given 40 times in one season, a symphony perhaps once in 10 years". Posterity has given an ironic twist to the notion: his symphonies are performed every day somewhere but, in Western Europe at least, only two of his ten operas are regularly to be seen in the theatre. *Mazeppa*, the seventh of them, has become festival fare, for production "once in ten years"—if we are lucky. Camden Festival, which revived it on Tuesday, had to be content with a concert performance by Chelsea Opera Group.

The drama derives from Pushkin's poem *Polzoya*, and deals with bloody assassinations and power-struggles in Peter the Great's Russia. It does not lose much without costumes and the stage, though it was difficult to believe that Mazeppa and his friend-victim Kochubei were elderly when two clearly young baritones were taking the parts—Michael Lewis and Robert Dean, bastions of the performance.

The music, on the other hand, does deserve to be heard and appreciated by devotees of Tchaikovsky and of opera in general. The plot rather vacillates, partly because those two old men are ambivalent characters, not respectively pure goodness and rank villainy. But every scene includes strongly felt solos and duets, and all end with music that leaves one anxious to hear what happens next, as witness the sextet with chorus at the close of the first scene, when Mazeppa removes Kochubei's young daughter (she is most willing from her father's home, a splendid set piece). There is the big spectacular crowd scene of Kochubei's execution, partly festive, partly gruesome; and the opera, full of fury and violence, ends with the heroine's gentle, entrancing lullaby over the corpse of her rejected first suitor.

This last was exquisitely voiced by Ellene Hannan, who had earlier brought new power and richness of tone to Maria's more hectic, or more intense, music. The object of the lullaby was Grigoriy Glazov, whose tenor voice, often strident but lyrically winning too, is well suited to Russian opera. Mr Lewis made a dynamic, ringing Mazeppa, his voice not perfectly steady, alas. Mr Dean, who had taken over his part at short notice, greatly impressed with his care for words and expressive colours, a brave achievement.

Mark Elder, conducting, consistently drew a wealth of character and flair from the score, and found generous response from the forces of COG, who are only amateurs in the best sense of the word.

Some of the reviews on this page are reprinted from yesterday's later editions

THE VIKINGS ARE HERE.

Though their violent raids are legendary, the Vikings were the greatest explorers, traders and settlers of their age. Now for the first time you can discover the many aspects of Viking life at the British Museum. See how they lived, their magnificent craftwork, their traded and looted treasures, jewellery, sword blades, Byzantine silks and Viking ship relics. It is an exhibition unlikely ever to be repeated. See it for yourself and discover the fascinating world of the Vikings.

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Mark Elder, conducting, consistently drew a wealth of character and flair from the score, and found generous response from the forces of COG, who are only amateurs in the best sense of the word.

Some of the reviews on this page are reprinted from yesterday's later editions

Sunday, sorry Sunday

That is why Sunday's General Election in Poland, meaningless though it is, yet has a meaning beyond that which those who have ordered it would like it to be thought to have. The Poles have no choice over who is appointed to rule them, or in what policies determined for them, or who is to rule. But they have a choice of forgetting about freedom or remembering it and they have chosen to remember it, for ever. I have no doubt that they will.

Sex tea

Waiting for a Budget bombshell

ching and th

the rights of r

employed alike (the que-
strickers' benefit is a
one) he will be much
able to resist attacks
other elements of his

Sex teaching and the rights of parents

In this most sensitive area our experience shows that blanket dicta such as Mr Butt suggests are not effective, though we share his concern.

Many of these comments also apply to the letter from the chairman of the Responsible Society (March 5). About three years ago, our national

Barbara
The author is chairman
Family Planning Assoc.

*The author is chairman
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Philip Ho

LONDON DIARY

ducer of the series, says: "I can't say it thrills me that hundreds of thousands of people will be sending their children

Critics who have complained that the series has been five hours' worth of commercials for independent education are assured that the BBC is now

Until his death at the age of 80 two years ago, Mr F. C. Morgan was the cathedral's honorary librarian. Now Miss Enelope Morgan devotes herself virtually full-time to the painstaking work of conserving the ancient books and manu-

College of Arms and the House of Lords, our parliamentary correspondent has discovered that Shrewsbury is, indeed, the oldest earldom where earl is a senior title, having been created in 1442.

Mr, I was only

practising boycotting the
Olympics...

10

...

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S THATCHER'S THREATS

cher said in the House on Tuesday that the Government would have to withhold part of the Community budget if it was not equitable solution to the country's budget difficulties. The threat was not stronger than those made in the past. Since the end of December 3, Dublin summit, she has clear that she sees two forms of pressure if not get satisfaction—contributions and punitive. She mentioned in her BBC interview that the fact that she is considering withholding the tax component of the Community budget, and did so without expressing any intention of mentioning the temperature in advance of the Brussels summit, which March 31.

THE HELP FOR ARSONISTS

of the BBC and the other brings up once again the dilemma that arises from the activities of violent groups have to be. The first rational aim is to win publicity for their cause. Therefore, any coverage of their activities is in effect to them. But suppression of news is a failure in the news media in the world would be in any case a rumour and panic. That treats such crimes as mayhem without in the motives behind the act to the public and the end into overlooking significant or even dangerous curricular feeling. This is a delicate responsibility to treat political news without suppression and the kind of gloating that can attach to a cause, or give it a greater importance than it deserves.

FUSION IN IRAN

not know whether, or to tent, the unfortunate in hostages in Tehran are of the manoeuvres, negotiations and speculations in the world about their release. It is hard to know to wish them better or to inform, whether they would be made sicker by the news of the fears of oblivion that that would or by the constant of hope to which their families are being ad.

me in a castle
Professor Luke Herrmann far as I am aware your brief of March 13 concerning the use of five portraits at the Castle in part satisfaction to the duty on the death of the Duke of Norfolk, records that occasion when such a case not involve the removal of works of art from their settings. These portraits have been allocated to the National Gallery, but "will remain in the Castle on permanent loan" provided that they are in full public view. This is a full public view. This is a full public view. This is a full public view.

agreement, and there have been extensive discussions. But plans for the early summit had to be abandoned and, with less than two weeks to go to Brussels, it is clear that Mrs Thatcher is going to have great difficulty in getting a satisfactory settlement. The French government even threatened last week to refuse to discuss the issue at all unless the Commission produced more specific proposals before the Brussels meeting—a procedure calculated to weaken Britain's bargaining position.

hainously as a number of others dealing with the harsher and more complex affairs of Northern Ireland. Someone said to claim a connection with the crimes was briefly seen passing a document to someone else. The spectacle added nothing to the argument beyond the frisson derived from the sight of a genuine alleged associate of terrorists, but that frisson can scarcely have been a very intense or alluring one. It is claimed that the programme structured police inquiries, and certainly if it made public useful information which its makers had been asked to conceal, that was a mistake. If, as has also been alleged, travelling expenses were paid to secure delivery of the document which the group must have been only too eager to promulgate, that was both wrong and unnecessary. But the ensuing chorus of indignation may have been counter-productive, for it has supplied the arsonists with more headlines and parliamentary flourishes than arson by itself ever brought.

There have been widespread reports of irregularities in the conduct of the poll, which is why a recount has been ordered, though why this should delay the final announcement of the first ballot results for another month, as was stated yesterday by the centre managing the elections, is not immediately clear. Nor is it clear that a recount is the right response, since many of the allegations concern irregularities in the voting itself, particularly on behalf of illiterates, rather than in the counting. At one point President Bani-Sadr was even suggesting that the elections might have to be annulled altogether, but it has apparently been decided that the incidence of fraud was not serious enough to justify this—though the argument given in support of this statement by the Supervisor of the Interior Ministry (that many of the groups making complaints were themselves the subject of complaints) hardly seems a conclusive one.

collection because of the failure to reach such an agreement, can be seen at Althorp in Northamptonshire, and other treasures. The National Portrait Gallery is to be congratulated on pioneering the new arrangement, by which the future of the art heritage of the provinces can at last be secured. Yours faithfully, LUKE HERRMANN, History of Art Department, University of Leicester, March 16.

resolve Britain's immediate difficulties, but it is badly needed. Meanwhile failure to get satisfaction would not justify British taking actions, such as withholding part of its contributions, which would be a clear breach of Britain's legal obligations as a member of the European Community. Respect for legality is important for the future of the Community. It is true that France, which so often claims to be an exemplary member of the Community, has now been in flagrant violation of its law for some months over its refusal to allow lamb imports from Britain, and has thereby weakened respect for the Court of Justice. But that is not a good enough reason to follow suit. If it does prove necessary to take strong action, Britain should confine itself to disruption within the law, which could be quite effective enough.

to impel some extremists to resort to desperate measures. The economic sufferings of industrial South Wales under the rule of a party which has little following in the Principality will tend to foster more widespread ill-will towards things English. There is a long tradition of marginal minor terrorism in Wales. The form it takes today is understandable though misguided. There are many areas throughout Britain where the ability of wealthier outsiders to push the price of cottages beyond what local people can afford creates a genuine problem. The contribution of such visitors to the local economy is equally real: indeed, the main sufferers if the campaign of arson ever begins to have its desired effect would be the communities in Wales that depend largely on tourism. Rural Wales has acute problems of depopulation and lack of opportunity, but as yesterday's report from the Development Board for Rural Wales indicates, there are likelier ways than this of countering them. Even apart from the obvious physical dangers involved in the campaign, burning houses down is a perverse way to cure a housing shortage.

the allegedly pro-Western secular liberals and the various left-wing groups including the Muslim "People's Mujahidin" who might have been the IRP's most serious rivals. It did not rule out the "Committee for Popular Co-ordination with the President of the Republic" formed by Mr Bani-Sadr's supporters. But this group was apparently too new for its existence to have registered with most voters, and very few drew a clear distinction between it and the IRP. The rivalry and the political differences between President Bani-Sadr and the IRP leader, Ayatollah Beheshti, have never been openly referred to in the Iranian media, and many voters may actually have believed that in voting for the IRP they were supporting the President.

conservation treatment at the British Museum. At the time of its discovery the St Ninian treasure was likewise sent to the Museum for treatment and arrangements were then made for the objects to be exhibited in London before being returned to Scotland. Would it be possible, through the courtesy of the Irish authorities, for this new find to be displayed for a short period at the British Museum before it is returned to Ireland after cleaning? There must be very many people for whom this would be their only opportunity to see an extraordinarily interesting "treasure of Ireland". Yours faithfully, KENNETH R. SMITH, 35 Stratford Road, Watford, Hertfordshire, March 11.

Human rights in Britain

From Mr Paul Sieghart
Sir, To judge from Fred Silverstein's description on your features page (March 17) of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, one might think it had been put together by a lot of undemocratic foreign socialists. In fact, its main architect was a leading British Conservative parliamentarian, a distinguished Attorney General, Home Secretary, and Lord Chancellor—the late Sir David Maxwell Fyfe, later Lord Kilbride.

Transport in London
From the Leader of the Greater London Council
Sir, The Chairman of London Transport (March 13) is right to say that London's public transport needs a commitment to investment over-riding the year-by-year fluctuations which beset all public sector projects. Indeed, any system of the size of London's must be defined by renewing and improving itself constantly merely to stand still. In this context the GLC and LT stand firmly together.

'Gone for a soldier'
From Colonel H. C. B. Rogers
Sir, Mr Harry Hopkins (March 17) appears to claim a knowledge of military history denied to the many eminent historians who have written those regal histories which he so amusingly describes as "hagiography". However, his own reading of military history seems to have been singularly circumscribed, for otherwise he would have been aware of the numerous contemporary accounts by both regimental officers and soldiers which portray a mutual esteem and often affection, totally at variance with the image he projects.

From Mr P. Barnett
Sir, Could not a special medal be struck for those who sat through the BBC 2 programme *Gone for a Soldier*? As one who could not take more than the first 15 minutes, I am grateful to your correspondents for their comments and their endurance must surely qualify them for a long service award. Yours faithfully, PATRICK BARNETT, The Lodge, Canon Pyon, Carmarthen, March 14.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A single-track Channel tunnel

From Mr Patrick Stobart
Sir, What is the latest proposal for a single-track tunnel under the Channel all about? For technical reasons, we are obliged to site any dry-dock link with Continental Europe at the only practical crossing point which is from Kent to the Pas de Calais. This is bad enough, since we should be obliged to divert all traffic from the industrial Midlands and North to Kent to the Pas de Calais. Added to this is the fact that free circulation of goods trucks and passenger coaches would be quite impossible, unless we were to trim back all our platforms and increase the size of our tunnels and bridges to receive the larger profile of Continental rolling stock. We should also have to harmonize our braking system with that of our neighbours.

National swimming galas
From the Speaker of the House of Commons and others
Sir, Whatever view one takes of the Olympic games in Moscow—and the undersigned are of many opinions—it is surely right to try to minimize the adverse effects of this controversy on children. It has been drawn to our attention that plans for Swim Around Britain, a series of swimming galas in the main regional centres of Britain in aid of the National Children's Homes, have been delayed by the loss of the original prizes—tickets to the Olympics. Unless Swim Around is rescued, some 9,000 youngsters who were expected to compete are apt to be bitterly disappointed, and another 5,000 in the children's homes will lose the chance of the £150,000 the sponsors hope to collect.

Labour and democracy
From Mr Ernie Roberts, MP for Hackney, North and Stoke Newington (Labour)
Sir, As a member of the Labour Party for forty years, I feel that I am better qualified than Bernard Levin can possibly be to comment on the party's internal arrangements for re-election. In their constituencies before an election. 2. A more democratic Britain, in which democracy means more than a vote every five years. The working class (the proletariat) constitutes the majority of the electorate, and they must have the right to control the government they elect. Sometimes, of course, they are persuaded by the press to elect a government detrimental to their interests—but they soon discover their mistake, as they are doing now. What the CLPD would like to see is a Labour Government which is continually accountable to the working people who elected it. And that, despite Levin's tendentious use of quotes from my book *Workers' Control*, is exactly what I mean by "the dictatorship of the working-class majority". Yours faithfully, ERNIE ROBERTS, House of Commons, March 18.

All that glisters
From Mr J. K. R. Murray
Sir, Dr Basil Bard's suggestion (March 5) that it should be made legal to market silver articles of a lower grade than normal sterling silver is unobjectionable only if it is compulsory to describe the articles, not as silver, but as "billon"—a useful word for base silver. If the hallmarking only were varied, would it not still be possible for manufacturers and advertisers to describe their wares as being of "gold" or "billon"? The something as "gold billon" would put it firmly in its place. It has long been a scandal that

Witless approach to Whistler?

From Professor Ronald Pickvance
Sir, Now that the proposed sale of some of Whistler's paintings from Glasgow University's art collection is out in the open, I should like to voice my own profound unease at what Mr Brinsley Ford has called a "disastrously short-sighted policy". The threat to our national heritage is obvious; but I should like to concentrate on its harmful local effects. It threatens to break up a unique collection of Whistler's work of acknowledged international standing. Whistler was not a highly productive painter in the way that Monet or van Gogh or Picasso were. He produced about 500 paintings. The university's collection of Whistler's work is that it represents much of what remained in Whistler's studio at his death: historically, then, it is an invaluable and irreplaceable "document".

and quickly. Swim Around starts this week in Belfast and will be staged as follows: Edinburgh (March 20); Glasgow (21); Leeds (24); Coventry (25); Plymouth (26); Cardiff (27); Blackpool (28); Crystal Palace, London (31). May we through your columns appeal to men and women of good will of all parties and all sides of industry, commerce and the media, to do their best to help by getting in touch with the organizers at: NCB, April 25, Highbury Park, London N5 1UD.

Hand to hand
From Mr H. A. Shaw
Sir, Bernard Levin's fascinating game (March 5) should prove fruitful; may I be permitted to extend it to South-east Asia? In 1950, a Malay penguin (headman) in Thailand was put to the Brixton in a psychiatric hospital for political reasons. In our view, Lord Carrington would do a service to the cause of freedom by requesting the release of Ceausescu's prisoners of conscience—as he has every right and even the duty to do under the Helsinki agreements. Yours faithfully, LEONARD KIRSCHEN, Vice-Chairman, HORIA GEORGESCU, General Secretary, British-Romanian Association, 54-62 Regent Street, W1, March 10.

Lack of red tape
From Mr George Choudhary-Best
Sir, The recent correspondence about red tape (eg Mr Hosking, March 15) calls to mind the fact that in the Civil Service the use of red tape is distinct from white tape. In the early 19th century, an economy measure because of the cost of dye (Public Record Office file STAT 12/14/4751/13). In the India Office, green tape was used to tie up documents; and indeed the cord of the "India tag" (less correctly called a "Treasury tag") is still coloured green today, its use having begun in the India Office as a result of a minute by Sir Arthur Godley in 1867. Yours faithfully, GEORGE CHOUHDHARY-BEST, 174 High Road, Basildon, Essex, March 16.

Witless approach to Whistler?

On a personal level, I deplore their disposal and dispersal. I do so as a student of Whistler for the past two decades and as an inheritor of the late Professor McLaren Young's devotion to Whistler scholarship. This will receive a timely boost when McLaren Young's catalogue raisonné of Whistler's paintings is published by Yale University Press in June of this year, thus coinciding with the opening of the Hunterian Art Gallery. Serious Whistlerians the world over will find this catalogue an indispensable work of reference. It would be hard, indeed, if some 10 or so of these paintings were then found to be en route to new owners. The catalogue would immediately become out of date!

Let the Hunterian Art Gallery open with its Whistler intact: let the new catalogue raisonné of his paintings remain accurately up to date. And let us not invite the ghost of Whistler, beside itself with rage, never a lover of commodes or cabals, of philistines or the press, to haunt us with a stream of unmatchable invective. Yours sincerely, RONALD PICKVANCE, Richmond Professor of Fine Art, The University of Glasgow.

Lawyers' labels
From Mr Jeremy Smith
Sir, Your report (March 14) on the Afghan situation includes the statement that "Tues today reported from Kabul that President Karmal of Afghanistan had received a delegation of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, representing eight Communist countries". In fact, the eight-person delegation to the International Association of Democratic Lawyers to Afghanistan consists of lawyers from Belgium, France, Algeria, West Germany, Finland, Austria, India and Palestine. Unless my arithmetic is wrong, I calculate that this delegation represents zero, rather than eight, "Communist countries". Whether the mistake lies with Tass or your correspondent, I would ask you to clarify the position, since the "ADL", to which the Haldane Society is affiliated, represents democratic and progressive lawyers from all types of society, and not any one section. Yours faithfully, JEREMY SMITH, Secretary, Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers, 14 Parkfield Road, NW10.

From Mr George Choudhary-Best
Sir, The recent correspondence about red tape (eg Mr Hosking, March 15) calls to mind the fact that in the Civil Service the use of red tape is distinct from white tape. In the early 19th century, an economy measure because of the cost of dye (Public Record Office file STAT 12/14/4751/13). In the India Office, green tape was used to tie up documents; and indeed the cord of the "India tag" (less correctly called a "Treasury tag") is still coloured green today, its use having begun in the India Office as a result of a minute by Sir Arthur Godley in 1867. Yours faithfully, GEORGE CHOUHDHARY-BEST, 174 High Road, Basildon, Essex, March 16.

is turning attention to hybrid vehicles such as buses propelled partly by battery and partly by overhead wires or diesel engines.

The limitations on performance of the state of the art are such that it is totally without appeal to private buyers, and it seems that when the oil shortage really begins to bite a solution is much more likely to be found in the use of substitutes such as synthetic from coal than in battery cars.

Pending that time, the prospect seems to be of smaller, simpler, more durable cars; buses and lorries as quiet and economical as manufacturers can make them, and heavily subsidized railways, electricity as much as the budget can stand.

Meanwhile, people can be expected to live close to their work or work closer to home as the cost of transport rises, and locally-produced goods and services can expect a fillip as long as the links are strengthened steadily through an era of cheap transport begun in many cases to shorten again.

Michael Bailey
Transport Correspondent

'Bunch of occupations

Efficiency demands professionals

There has been insufficient emphasis at the most senior levels (including within Government) on the importance of a wide-ranging knowledge of transport among its practitioners. The various committees considered whether transport was "a specific, highly complex and skilled entity within the life of the nation" or just a "disparate group of loosely related activities" (akin to the views of its founders in 1919).

They concluded that transport, including physical distribution, was "a comprehensive and coherent science, art and practice requiring a broad and deep body of theoretical and practical learning, knowledge, understanding and experience which is common to all the various modes of transport that effectively transport themselves" (a significant level of knowledge, experience and responsibility requiring its practitioners to keep abreast of rapidly changing conditions and technology).

The CIT took on board the substance of the Massfield proposals as to the seven primary functions covering all transport modes and activities: transport policy and financial control; transport operations and management; transport planning; physical distribution management; transport technology; social and environmental aspects; and transport research and development.

The CIT took on the body of knowledge upon which the CIT's examinations, and higher membership qualifications, are based.

The emphasis laid by the committees on broadening the membership has led to a new education and management grade structure. Licentiate holders are open to holders of defined qualifications such as the National Examinations Board in Supervisory Studies Certificate or the Certificate of Competence in Road Transport, or those with 10 years in first line supervisory management.


About a quarter of the membership resides outside Britain and Ireland. The new education and management grade structure is available in Ghana, Hongkong, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, and southern Africa. Overseas branches are moving towards autonomy. Dr Liam St John Devlin, the CIT president, continued on next page



**"MUST KEEP GOING...
GOT 600 MILLION MILES
TO GO THIS YEAR."**

"I'm a National Bus... got to keep going... but with 17,000 of us on the roads, carrying 1,800 million passengers... every year... got to keep up the pace...
... We're fully geared for the nineteen eighties: there will be new laws presenting new challenges, but we'll be way out in front..."

We'll continue to be the most... flexible,
economic and universal transport system.
That's it... must keep going..."

NATIONAL 

**National Bus Company:
geared for the eighties.**

Need for electric tracks

Computerized railways planned

With the expectation of increases in oil prices, and uncertainty about the performance and the reliability of supplies, it is logical that the forward planning for British Rail should be based on electrification.

Britain stands seventeenth on a list of countries based on the extent of their conversion to electric railways. Countries such as Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Italy and Austria with, respectively, 93, 62, 58, 48 and 48 per cent of their routes electrified, are the leaders primarily because they are well endowed with cheap hydroelectric power.

Other countries, such as The Netherlands, adopted electric traction on a large scale many years ago because they lacked indigenous fossil fuels. Several others adopted electrification when reconstructing their devastated railways after 1945.

While taking those background factors into consideration, there still appears to be some force in the suggestion that Britain has been too slow in electrification. There have been several sound reasons for this which had more validity at the time than hindsight now allows. The world oil crisis of 1973-74 gave the matter a new kind of urgency, and there can be no satisfaction for anyone now in knowing that Britain has only 20 per cent of its

11,200 miles of railway tracks electrified. Japan, with 13,300 miles of track, has 40 per cent electrified; West Germany, with 17,900 miles of track, has 35 per cent; the Soviet Union, with 84,100 miles, has 29 per cent; France, with 21,600 miles, has 27 per cent; Spain, with 8,300 miles, has 26 per cent; Poland, with 14,700 miles, has 22 per cent.

It is in the light of Britain's place in this list that the words of Sir Peter Parker, chairman of the British Railways Board, in the board's last annual report can be seen to be so important. Referring to the "emerging national priority of electrification", Sir Peter said: "It is essential that the main strategic rail routes are electrified by the turn of the century".

Some hope that this target can be achieved might be given in the report of a joint working party of the British Railways Board and the Department of Transport to be published this summer.

At present, however, with only one electrification project in hand—the short distance linking St Pancras and Moorgate, with Bedford—senior British Rail executives are aware that there is no time to lose. That project will, in any case, be completed early in 1982. What they seek now is the encouragement and the

means to draw up an electrification plan for the next 20 years.

It is within that time-scale that British Rail hopes to plan further modernization of its services as well as the electrification of the tracks. Much of this will be based on the technological revolution caused by the development of the silicon chip. Through the opportunities offered by micro-electronics the British Rail research and development teams are working on ideas which will create as dramatic a revolution in transport as that achieved by their railway pioneering predecessors of the 1820s.

For future rail passengers, micro-electronics will open up new opportunities whether they are travelling by battery-powered railcar—the 250 km/h Advanced Passenger Train—or the 500 km/h magnetically-levitated vehicle.

The purchase of a ticket could buy a travel package including electric cars scheduled to collect passengers from their homes and convey them to their destination. In between, there will be a rail journey in which every move will be monitored by the protective control of the silicon chip.

Tickets will be issued by microprocessors and seats reserved and luggage conveyed to the train by the same process. The microprocessor will also monitor

the train's suspension to give a smoother ride. Information will be much improved and many sessions are likely to be unmanned, with television sets to inform passengers about train arrivals and departures.

In the age of the micro-electronic railway the control centre will be the base from which the silicon chip will drive the trains, make split-second signalling decisions, and maintain the strictest safety standards. Huge areas will be controlled by one person able to see at the touch of a button movements taking place perhaps hundreds of kilometres away. System-wide telephone, radio and video links will keep passengers and staff fully informed.

The chip is at the heart of Tops (Total Operations Processing System), the magic eye seeing and memorizing every wagon and its movement. The Tops computer sends data to freight yards everywhere, helping to ensure that wagons are on hand to move goods where required.

But if the silicon chip can offer us now a glimpse of the future of our railways, the present is one of continuing success with the Inter City services and the expected introduction of the Advanced Passenger Train on the Euston-to-Glasgow route in May.

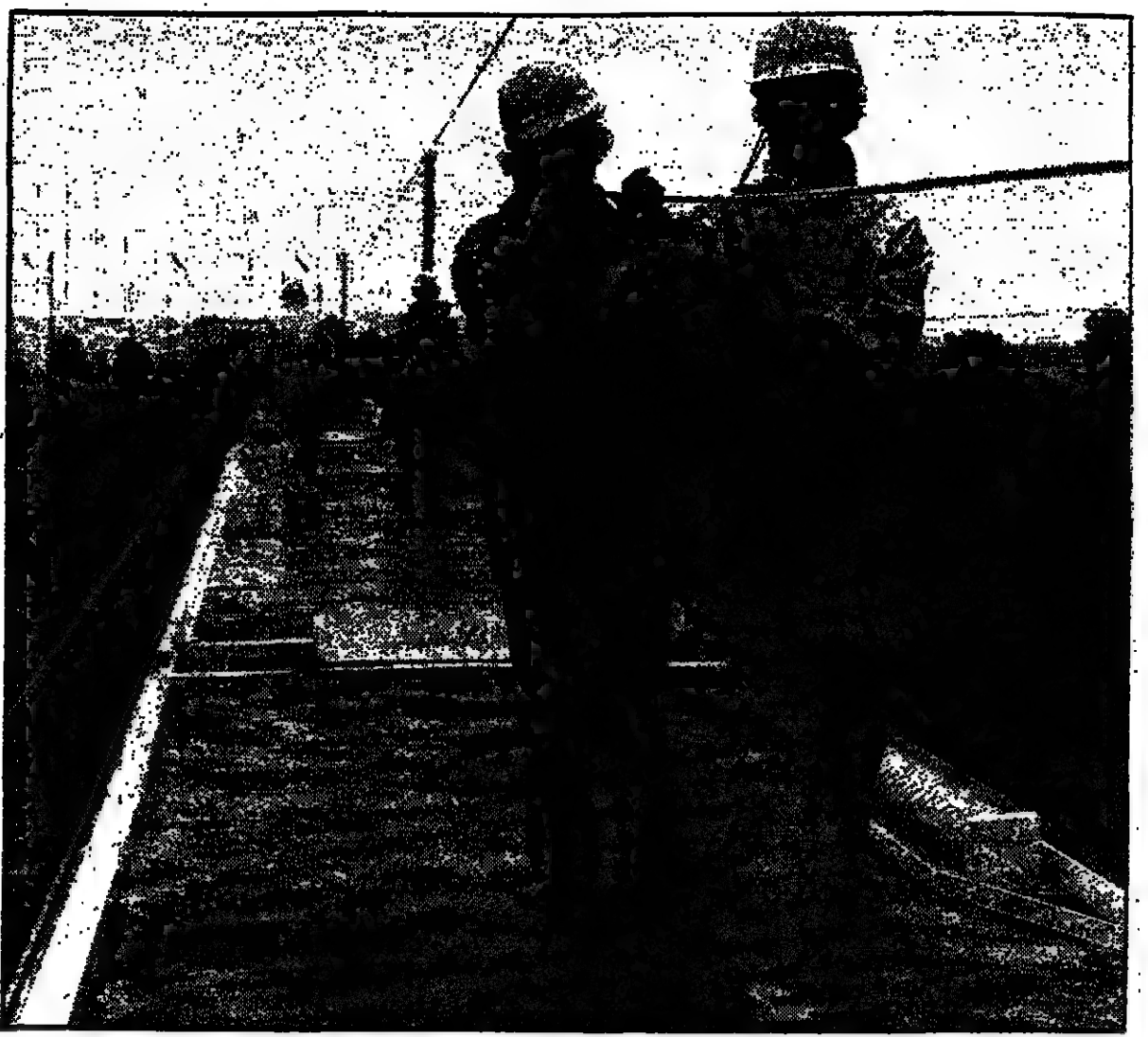
One of the problems, now the subject of a major

study, is that of commuter traffic in London and the South-east. On this Sir Peter Parker is determined to find a better way of providing the resources and support needed.

"We know the concern of the Minister of Transport, who is deeply committed to finding a solution to this problem," says Sir Peter. "We are working closely on it with our colleagues on the Greater London Council and at London Transport."

British Rail is never short of critics, but many of them may be surprised to know that it actually achieves an operating surplus. This was £37,800,000 in 1978 and £44,700,000 in 1977—the most recent figures available, although the surplus is calculated after allowing for the Government's contribution through its Public Service Obligation (PSO) this is still lower, as a proportion of the gross domestic product, than the European average. In 1977 the PSO was 0.35 per cent of the g.d.p. compared with 0.84 per cent in Europe.

As for the future of British Rail, Sir Peter Parker leaves no room for doubt about his confidence. "The time for railways has come again", he says. "The case is being made by the increasing number of passengers we are carrying through the system."



Alan Grainge Electrifying the tracks near Stewartby, south of Bedford.

The Time Machine.

New York in 4 hours.
Washington in 4 hours 10 mins.
Bahrain in 4 hours 10 mins.
Dallas in 7 hours 45 mins.*
Singapore in 9 hours 10 mins.†

**British
airways
Concorde**

*Interchange with Braniff †In association with SIA

The juggernaut stays

Conflict over freight sharpens

Some 1,800 million tonnes of freight were moved in Britain in 1978, the last year for which complete statistics are available.

Of this 1,500 million tonnes, or 83 per cent, went by road; 170 million tonnes, or 9 per cent, by rail; 82 million tonnes, 4 per cent, by pipeline; 55 million tonnes, 3 per cent, by coastal shipping; and five million tonnes, 0.5 per cent, by inland waterway.

The biggest commodity group within this total was building material, timber and aggregates, with 520 million tonnes; followed by food, drink and tobacco with 315 million tonnes; oil and petroleum products, 485 million tonnes; coal and coke, 158 million tonnes; iron and steel, 92 million tonnes; and chemical and fertilisers, 77 million tonnes.

In money terms, however, freight assumed a far greater relative importance in the nation's transport budget; about £11,000m out of a total transport expenditure of £26,000m. Of this £10,400m was spent on road freight, and £500m on rail freight.

There were 1,750,000 lorries and vans on the roads out of a total of 18 million vehicles of all kinds; and they travelled about 2,500,000 million vehicle miles out of a total of 13,500,000 million for all traffic.

Thus by far the greater part of freight traffic goes by road, where most people regard it as an unmitigated nuisance: taking up road space that motorists want to use; belching out fumes and reverberating noise in towns and cities where people want cleanliness and quiet; destroying road surfaces and even damaging buildings.

Get it back on the rail, ways or even on to the canals is the cry of the environmentalists and the energy conservationists and successive governments under heavy pressure to do just that must have dearly wished it were possible.

Unfortunately the facts as brought out in a series of studies in some of which the railways themselves have been involved, point to the opposite conclusion. However much the ordinary citizen may wish to get rid of the hated juggernaut, it is an essential part of our modern lifestyle, with its huge range of goods and services readily available in every town and city.

Much freight goes by road because it is cheaper, quicker, more efficient and reliable; much more goes because it is the only pos-



The beg of the environmentalists—some of the (urban) lorry routes, and the move towards quieter, cleaner vehicles.

The one move that might help hauliers to cut their costs—higher maximum lorry weights—continues to be frustrated for environmental reasons, and awaits the outcome of the inquiry into lorries and the environment being carried out by the Government by Sir Arthur Arncliffe.

It has been generally accepted for some years that the best way of overcoming the lorry nuisance is to provide suitable roads for heavy vehicles in the form of good motorways and trunk roads between towns and cities and linking the main industrial areas to each other and to the ports; and of by-pass roads round towns and villages whose historic or residential or shopping streets are unsuitable for the big lorries of today.

As an adjunct to this London and other cities have applied restrictions on lorries that are permitted to enter urban areas, a trend reinforced by the Dyles Act of the mid-1970s requiring local authorities to prepare steps along these lines.

In the end a balance has to be struck between the benefits road transport brings in the form of employment, prosperity, efficient industry, and rapid, frequent delivery of consumer goods to the shops and supermarkets, and the drawbacks of traffic congestion, noise, fumes and visual intrusion.

It is a conflict that could be said to be at the heart of our modern way of life.

Michael Bailey

Efficiency demands professionals

continued from previous page

there will be a large contingent of professionals from the United States. Conceivably from such international conferences, we may one day see a world institute of transport professionals sharing common standards.

Twenty-four branches beat the institute's drum in Britain. All hold regular meetings and some mount regional conferences, there are several in New College, Oxford. The pleasant headquarters of the institute are in the larger cover. It is hoped that employers in the industry,

There are no resources to maintain a central register of current research projects at headquarters though Mr Arthur Beckenham, director of education and training, edifies the transport search bulletin issued periodically to members with the institute's journal.

The institute does not pronounce on current controversies such as labour relations, though several members have presented papers on them and most transport discussions include them.

John Darker

Pressure on car owners

Petrol engine will hold its own
—unless the wells run dry

Never can the economic of these acquire cars will pressure on car owners have depended mainly on the general level of prosperity in the country. In the last decade, and particularly after the Yom Kippur war in 1973 which led to a quadrupling of oil prices, spectacular rises in the cost of petrol but of cars themselves, parts, servicing and insurance made motoring for many people the most expensive item in the family budget, not excluding the mortgage.

But although motorists tended to use their cars less and keep them longer, and to skimp on servicing (or attempt to do it themselves), there was not the slightest evidence of cars being abandoned completely. By the end of the 1970s there were more than 14 million of them on the roads of Britain, compared with 11,500,000 when the decade began.

The prospect for the 1980s is that car ownership will increase still further, though probably at a slower rate. There is certainly room for growth for, surprisingly as it may seem, more than 40 per cent of households still do not have the use of a car. How many

which is foreign to a democratic society, how can motorists be persuaded back into trains and buses? And while more and more people take to cars, so public transport declines; it is a vicious circle.

The other area of official concern, probably a more pressing one, is energy saving. The motoring lobby may be quick to point out that only 17 per cent of oil consumed in Britain is attributable to cars, but with energy prices and expensive, the motorist can not expect to be excused from conservation campaigns.

Raising petrol duty may be one way of saving fuel, though the evidence is that motorists tend to struggle with price rises surprisingly quickly. The car is a sacred thing, and something else in the budget has to go.

Rationing of petrol is a recurring threat, though no government would undertake this necessarily bureaucratic and unpopular exercise lightly.

The other approach is to ensure that cars use less fuel on start, which, a motor industry has given a

commitment to the Government that consumption by new cars will be reduced by an average of 10 per cent by 1985, a target that will be met by reductions in weight, better aerodynamics and more efficient engines and transmissions.

The United States has gone further than exhortation to car makers, setting minimum consumption figures that a manufacturer must strike across its range on penalty of fine. The targets, bearing in mind the traditional size of American cars, are stringent, rising to 32.5 miles per imperial gallon by the mid-1980s. Whether European governments possibly prompted by the EEC, will follow suit remains to be seen.

On the whole, European cars are much smaller and less thirsty. Only 10 per cent of new cars sold in Britain are over two litres capacity and the number of petrol-guzzling Rolls-Royces and Jaguars is many times outweighed by cars at the other end of the economy spectrum. There is talk about a switch to smaller cars but this need to be very pronounced to have

much impact. Escort owners dropping to a Fiesta are not going to solve the energy crisis.

Cars will become more efficient, in fuel saving, in the provision of interior space and in the ease—and hence cost—of repairs and maintenance. But there is unlikely, at the present rate of progress, to be a serious challenger to the internal combustion petrol engine, which has powered the car through its first 100 years before the end of the century at least.

As Churchill said of democracy, the system is not perfect but you only have to look at the alternatives. The electric car must be a contender, but only if batteries can be devised that give much better performance and a greater range before recharging. Steam, gas and hydrogen all have their supporters, all at the moment have deadly drawbacks. But if the oil really is going to run out early in the twenty-first century, an answer may have to be ready.

Peter Waymark
Motoring Correspondent

Road policy criticism

Three checks to expansion

The publication, expected next month, of the annual White Paper on roads policy has been timed to reflect the limitations imposed by the preceding White Paper on public expenditure. It seems certain to be criticized on opposing fronts; by the so-called road haulage lobby, who will express predictable dismay at the postponement of what they see as essential schemes for new construction and improvement; and by the anti-roads campaigners who believe that the time is ripe to call a halt to further large-scale projects on the grounds that the nation cannot afford them and that they will eventually prove to have been unnecessary.

There are three main constraints on further road building. One is the much-rehearsed environmental argument that new roads, and particularly motorways, swallow up a disproportionate amount of agricultural land, or, alternatively, destroy or blight large areas of towns and cities, whose inhabitants are made to suffer for the sake of the convenience of commuters and the commercial profit of haulage firms.

The second constraint is the difficulty in deciding whether a particular road will justify its construction. One of the arguments used by opponents of road schemes is that oil prices rise and, eventually, absolute shortages of fuel will demand alternative systems of transportation.

When the oil runs out, it is argued, motorways will become the twenty-first century equivalent of the works of Ozymandias, with weeds forcing their way through the tarmac and, no doubt, a sandy soil blowing across them from the dustbowl created by modern farming methods.

The general feeling, however, is that this is an unlikely scenario. Petroleum products are expected to last, or be conserved for transport purposes, at least until the middle of the next century, by which time it must be assumed that alternative methods of propulsion will have been developed. The official view in Britain, as in most other countries, is that private motoring will continue to play an increasingly important role in the transport scene. Even the more enlightened conservationists have come to accept that it is unrealistic to base future traffic forecasts on the likelihood of the oil running out.

Third, and most immediate, constraint lies in the availability of public funds, which, again, certain protesters were able to command—exemplified by Mr. John Tyne, who became something of a cult figure and has since large disapproval from view—have backed.

There was certainly considerable disenchantment with the supposedly middle-class protesters who, it was said, ignored the incomes of those who stood to benefit from new roads that would take traffic out of the streets where they lived.

Conservationists were also seen to have created their own paradox. Was it, for example, better to continue to allow heavy traffic to rumble through the streets, damaging buildings and inflicting noise and disruption on people's daily lives, than to construct a new by-pass through open countryside, which would destroy other people's cherished amenities? The juggernaut would simply not go away, whatever was done.

Nicholas Cole

Bus services on brink of change

Now neither competition nor innovation

by the year 2000, one quarter of all households in Britain will probably be without a car. Many of these will be elderly people and families on low incomes who need dependable transport as much as people with cars.

When this forecast was made in a 1978 government policy paper, the bus sector of public transport had probably reached its lowest level of dependability. The Government National Bus Company (NBC) and since 1976 slashed services "to spare economies amounting to some 48 million miles a year," while London Transport, one of the world's leading transit undertakings, was slated for the fourth successive year by the LT Passenger Committee for "the general unreliability of bus services."

In 1978, central and local

government support for bus services totalled £231m, compared with £23m in 1963. Bus use has halved since 1959, yet the total mileage of all forms of passenger transport has doubled.

In other words, buses have been carrying a decreasing share of a growing market at an increasing cost to the public, through rates and taxes in addition to fares. "This does not challenge the proposition that bus services have and should have an important role to play," Mr. Norman Fowler, the Transport Minister, said during the recent second reading of the Transport Bill.

But, he continued, it challenges the relevance of the legal framework, which through the 1930 Road Traffic Act, confers "a controlled monopoly" designed not to encourage new operators, but to prevent them.

"The licensing system—the heart of the problem—still discourages newcomers from entering the industry," Mr. Fowler said. "It neither provides competition nor does it encourage innovation and adaptation to new circumstances. Some parts of the country—noteably some of the rural areas—have clearly inadequate passenger services. Some services are controlled where there is no need for control."

The Bill, likely to be law by early summer, scraps restrictions on new operators entering the industry, and on existing operators expanding. Where no service exists, a road service licence will be granted automatically. There is also provision for the designation of "trial areas" where licensing controls would be removed.

These controls will end altogether on Express ser-

vices carrying passengers more than 50 miles. For services under 50 miles, the onus will be on the Traffic Commissioners to grant a licence unless they are satisfied that to do so would be against the public interest, placing the burden of proof on the objector rather than the applicant.

Private hire services regularly carrying passengers at separate fares will no longer be subject to road service licensing, while fare controls will be applied only to protect the public from unreasonable use of monopoly power, or to regulate the terms of competition.

Non-profit car-sharing schemes and minibuses with up to eight seats will be allowed and encouraged, with advertising permitted for the first time. Safety requirements are to remain.

The Confederation of British Road Passenger Trans-

port, representing 98 per cent of the bus industry, favours reform of what it calls "a cumbersome and complicated" system, but confederation members have serious reservations about deregulating.

Main operators like NBC, which runs countrywide services through 35 subsidiaries, fear a fiercely competitive free-for-all which would damage public interest as well as themselves.

They see the way being paved for "freelance operators" to challenge them for routes earning high passenger revenues per mile, such as those enjoying day-long passenger usage between large towns.

This would, they say, dilute their ability to operate a broad network of services, including those where social need prevails over economic reality. The

sequel would be further pruning of marginal and loss-making runs.

With smaller operators take up uneconomic routes and be prepared to offer remote villages for example? This would be one logical conclusion of the Government's thinking, and the operators' answer is "yes"—provided that shire county councils continue to make up the losses through revenue support grants.

It is sheer speculation to believe that private operators will rush in to run uneconomic services. However, Britain's bus services are on the brink of change from a public utility to a commercial industry, one that is likely to be less seemingly bureaucratic and more market-oriented, as in continental Europe and America.

Nicholas Cole

But he repeated the view that it would be inappropriate for national policies to be re-examined at local level. In the recent House of Lords decision, which adjudged that government methods of forecasting could not be challenged at inquiries.

The motorway objectors were not happy. But given the present Government's view on public expenditure, the roads "lobby" is not likely to find anything much to console it.

John Young
Planning Reporter

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TRANSPORT

Tourists and businessmen may be segregated at airports

More air travellers but cheap-fare revolution is ending

Although the number of people travelling by air continues to increase, world airlines face a gloomy immediate future as their finances are eroded by sharply rising costs, particularly those for fuel and airport and navigation charges.

To try to keep pace with these increases, the operators repeatedly ask for fare increases from the aviation licensing authorities, but they are conscious that the point cannot be far away when the public begins to refuse to pay their higher prices.

The days of the cheap fare revolution, introduced by Sir Freddie Laker with his Skytrain North Atlantic service, are numbered, and the public in Britain and Europe is unlikely to enjoy again such travel bargains as they are being offered in the United States this summer.

But at the moment the public is still flying in droves, although the airlines and the airport authorities detect a trend in cut back on fringe spending on such items as duty-free goods, car hire and expensive airport car parking.

Within the United States, which has traditionally been the cheapest place for fuel, aviation kerosene now costs an average of 75 cents a gallon.

In January, 1978, the comparative figure was 35 cents in other parts of the world. Some airlines are paying \$1.35 as a matter of routine and on the spot market-buys, without a long-term contract, is considerably higher.

Every airline has its own forecast on what fuel prices will do in the coming years, but on past forecasting records those estimates are unreliable and are usually pitched too low. Such uncertainties bedevil not only airline planning, but also the planning of those who run the world's airports.

This is the reason behind

the recent decision by the British Government not to invest in a big new airport for London, to be used after the existing airports at Heathrow and Gatwick became full.

Instead, the Government is to develop Stansted, to the north-east of the capital, an airport which is already in being, and which can be enlarged gradually if, and when, the traffic warrants it. By the end of this decade, Stansted could be dealing with 15 million passengers a year. By the end of the century it could take 30 million a year, but it would be a brave aviation soothsayer who in 1980 predicted that, against the background of fuel price rises, and the scarcity of kerosene, civil aviation will expand to anything like that extent.

Meanwhile, aviation life goes on, and this year about 800 million people are expected to fly world-wide. Such masses on the move by air are producing new thinking by the airlines and airport authorities on how to handle them. The 550-seater jumbo jet is already a reality in Japan; British Airways is talking to Boeing, the American manufacturer, about a 600-seater, and the 1,000-seater airliner is on the drawing board.

Terminal capacity at airports, rather than runway capacity, is the limiting factor. To this end, check-in, immigration, customs, and baggage reclaim procedures are being simplified, and there is a strong move within the airlines to segregate the mass of holiday and tourism passengers from those travelling for business.

It would not be surprising in the near future to see airports dedicated solely to the use of either of these important groups. Another idea being actively considered by some airlines with a view to reducing overcrowding at airport terminals is to have leisure passengers checking in themselves and their baggage at terminals remote from the airport, then being taken direct to their aircraft by bus when the flight is ready to leave.

Shuttle services, where passengers need make no advance bookings, but simply "turn up and take off"



Of the 800 million people expected to fly worldwide this year many are carried by smaller companies such as those pictured above who fly between the United Kingdom mainland and the Channel Isles.

minerals is to have leisure passengers checking in themselves and their baggage at terminals remote from the airport, then being taken direct to their aircraft by bus when the flight is ready to leave.

Shuttle services, where passengers need make no advance bookings, but simply "turn up and take off"

in the words of British Airways, have not proliferated to such an extent as was forecast even five years ago. They exist in Britain between London and Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast and Manchester, in the United States, between New York and Washington and Boston, and in Brazil.

But although they provide a fast and easy service for the passengers, and have been proved to improve traffic figures, they do pose large problems for the airlines. Not least the necessity to have a large fleet of aircraft permanently dedicated to the shuttle routes to

keep the promise to the travellers that nobody will ever be left behind, even if there is only one person to an aircraft.

Flying shuttle services across national boundaries raises a new set of problems which, so far, have proved insoluble. Attempts to start such flights between London and Paris, Brussels and Amsterdam have been in progress for years, but have failed to date, largely because governments and all the bureaucratic paraphernalia of immigration and customs control have to be brought in.

But with Britain in the

EEC, and with the Community taking a new interest in commercial aviation in general, these problems could be overcome soon. Work is going ahead at Heathrow on a separate terminal in which flights to the cities mentioned above will be concentrated and from which shuttle services could be operated.

The EEC has said that it wants lower fares within Europe, an area where air passengers pay some of the highest prices in the world because of the high costs of airline operation there. A number of British airlines have indicated that they are prepared to offer cheap fares if they are allowed new routes, but there are

no moves in sight suggesting that Europe might become an area where, as is the case in the United States, almost everybody can afford to hop on an airliner.

As in the case of shuttle services, the airlines are up against a long list of governments with varying policies towards aviation. Many

of them own either a large stake in their airlines and are unwilling to see the financial and strategic positions of their country degraded by newcomers offering bargain-basement air travel.

Arthur F
Air Correspondent

Better times for tramps

Shipping prospects are improving

Until Russia threw the world into a state of fresh uncertainty by marching into Afghanistan, the shipping industry was beginning to emerge from the longest and deepest slump of modern times. After five years in which the many surplus tankers had been used first for dry cargo and then as lines, freight rates were beginning to climb back to a profitable level. A rosy future during the 1980s was being predicted for bulk carriers in particular, when President Carter's embargo on American grain shipments to Russia removed at once the biggest single commodity movement supporting the revival.

Since then both dry cargo and tanker rates have fallen, but not excessively—war is, after all, with famine the traditional source of freight market booms.

The picture is still far too unclear for it to be predicted with certainty whether the withdrawal of this 17 million tonnes—more than 10 per cent of the world's total grain movement by sea—will throw the freight market back into the doldrums.

Given a reasonable growth in world trade—one expert forecast at a recent shipping conference in London was for no growth this year, 1 per cent next year, 8 per cent in 1982, and an average 4 per cent a year for the remainder of the decade—together with low output from the shipyards, there is a chance of real prosperity in the shipping markets within the next two years for the first time since 1973.

With the wisdom of hindsight there is no doubt that caution this time. The banks which contributed so heavily to the last slump, by financing too much tonnage with too little security in the early 1970s, promise that this time they will be far more selective. But there is no doubt that the banks are back in the market, interested in investing in shipping once more.

If tramp shipping is moving into better times, liner shipping is still in difficulties. This is a result not only of surplus tramp ships being used for passengers, but also of political uncertainties compounded for established maritime states such as Britain by attempts on the part of developing countries to carry a larger share of the world's liner trade.

These efforts have been promoted strongly by the United Nations Committee for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) as part of its wider attempts to redress the balance of wealth between the poor countries of the world, where people starve daily, and the rich countries where many die from over-consumption.

Liner shipping, largely a British invention, grew up in the nineteenth century to provide regular services between the colonial powers of Europe and their colonies in America, Africa and the East, carrying in the main manufactured goods outward and food and other

commodities homeward. While control of the commodities themselves was long since wrested in most developing countries from European hands, liner shipping has remained until recently very much as it was before, with Britain the world's leading flag, and big liner fleets under the other old colonial flags of Europe, as well as of Japan and the United States.

Despite the inappropriateness of liner shipping for poor countries in view of the amount of capital and skill needed, the glamour of a national flag continues to attract, and most developing states now have a shipping line of their own, normally built up with the help of the older lines in the trade. But many remained dissatisfied with the share of their overseas trade they were carrying, and this led in the early 1970s to the formulation of the UNCTAD code requiring, among other things, each liner trade to be divided into 40 per cent for the partners at either end, with 20 per cent for "cross-traders".

After initial opposition, the developed countries have come around in the past two years to supporting at least a modified version of this code (if only for fear that if it is not ratified, something worse will take its place) and the expectation is that liner shipping will be increasingly affected by it over the next decade.

Of greater concern to British shipping at the moment, however, is competition on the one hand from Russia and her Eastern block allies, and on the other from entrepreneurs flying flags such as those of Hongkong, Taiwan and Singapore.

Russia regards shipping as an arm of the state for strategic and political as well as for economic purposes, and Russian lines have been highly successful over the past few years in penetrating trades hitherto dominated by Western lines, usually operating outside conferences and with fares

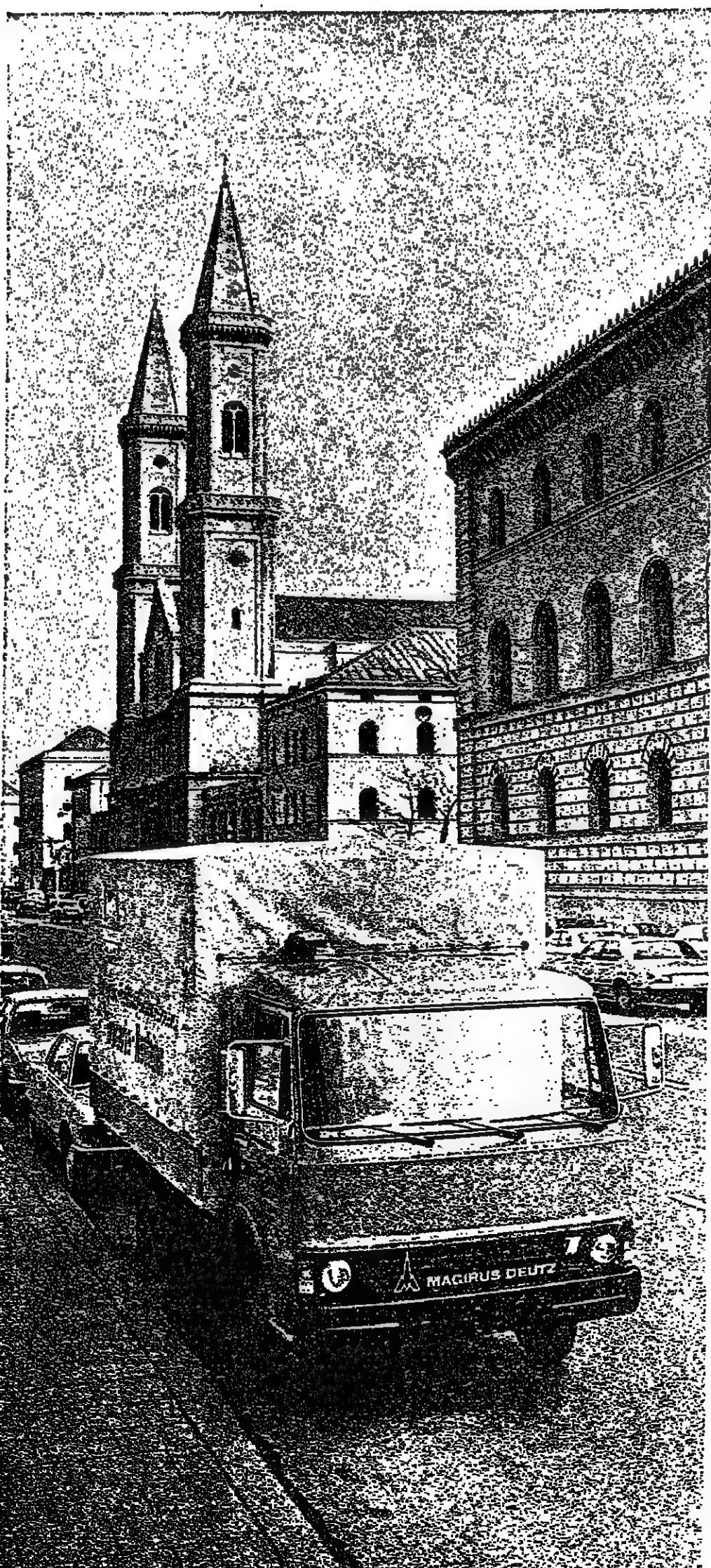
as much as 30 per cent cheaper than the conference fares.

The state trading company able to control both shipping and cargo has a big advantage in dealing with commercial lines which do not control cargo, and with shippers who are all competing with each other and are therefore vulnerable to cheap offers. Russian shipping advances, compounded in the European Far East trades by rapid growth in traffic on the Trans-Siberian Railway, have reached the point of which the United States and Western Europe have both been forced to take protective measures, tentative though they may be so far.

Western Europe, under the auspices of the EEC, has been monitoring Russian ship movements in Western European ports for some time, with the tentative objects of imposing limits on their activities and possibly penalties where they are

seen to be damaging interests of those countries. Equally worrying to listed owners, coastal shipping, and Europe's relatively high costs, are the activities of their thriving commercial skills and huge of cheap labour, may come to profit, rather than the established states, from the better way. In an attempt to off such an eventuality, the General Council of Shipping has asked the European Commission to pressure the Russian Government to open up new markets to shipping, and to reduce the subsidies to the merchant fleet by a 10 per cent. With shipping costs rising fast, the renewed interest in burning ships, and in ing ships.

Michael



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conference of the Young

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while political measures change.

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year as a result of the strong

pound, and rapidly rising

labour costs. The bulletin

Bank Governor predicts interest rates at peak for several months

By Caroline Addison

Interest rates are likely to stay at the present record levels for several more months. Mr Gordon Richardson, Governor of the Bank of England said in London yesterday that there is no alternative to high interest rates until inflation begins to slow down.

This is unlikely to happen until the summer at the earliest. The Bank of England forecast yesterday that inflation would accelerate further in the coming few months.

The Governor recognized that high interest rates and a tight money policy will lead to lower living standards for a year or two. The Bank forecast a drop in economic output of at least 2 per cent in its latest Quarterly Bulletin, published yesterday. Manufacturing output may fall by twice as much as this.

The Governor, speaking at a lunch for The Young Businessmen of the Year, appeared to be defending the Bank against recent criticism that it is not firmly committed to a tight money policy. Mr Richardson said that the Bank saw it as its duty to "put its weight consistently behind policies designed to promote a framework of monetary stability". He emphasized the containing role of the Bank while political measures change.

The Bank in its latest bulletin calls for a continued money squeeze as the only way to bring down inflation and "lay the basis for economic growth in later years".

It points to a dramatic fall in British competitiveness last year as a result of the strong pound, and rapidly rising labour costs. The bulletin comments that a higher output in the present year would mean that in the last will be "disappointing", adding to the already considerable financial pressures on industry.

The Bank expects the present cash squeeze on industry to worsen this year. The combination of high interest rates and a high exchange rate, it

Estimated deployment of oil exporters' surpluses

\$ billions	1977	1978	1979			
	Year	Year	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr
United Kingdom	4.1	-1.8	2.3	2.0	8.9	4.1
United States	9.2	1.3	-1.6	1.0	2.2	6.1
Other countries	18.9	13.6	5.4	1.9	11.8	—
International organisations	0.3	0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.4	0.2
Total	33.5	13.2	5.9	4.8	22.5	n.a.

company profits in 1979, with industrial profitability falling to its lowest level since 1975 in the first nine months of the year.

The Bank's assessment concentrates on the impact of higher oil revenues on international banking, and on domestic money policy.

The recent oil price rises are expected to lead to Opec surpluses as large in real terms as those produced by the first oil price rise in 1973. They are also likely to last longer than before.

The problems facing the world's banking system are thus severe. The Bank estimates that all exporting countries will run a surplus this year of \$112,000m, after one of \$77,000m last year.

The bulletin repeats the Governor's suggestion that the International Monetary Fund should introduce new lending facilities to help to recycle oil funds to deficit countries.

Official institutions will have to help more in the recycling in 1981 and later years than last time round. The international banking system, though larger and more experienced now, will face difficulties in recycling on its own.

The oil price rise is equivalent to an indirect tax of 2 per cent levied by Opec on the industrialized world, and will probably add 2 per cent directly to industrialized countries' inflation this year, according to the Bank.

The bulletin takes a rather ambiguous view towards the strength of the pound. On the one hand it points out that the 12 per cent rise in sterling in the past year has led to a marked deterioration in Britain's trade performance.

Manufactured exports are expected to show little if any rise in the near future, and manufacturing industry has been damaged by the erosion of competitiveness.

However, the bulletin also acknowledges that one of the ways in which a tight money policy is supposed to bring about lower inflation is through the exchange rate. Thus the strong pound has been one element in a restrictive monetary policy.

The Bank expects money growth to moderate in the coming months, as companies begin to desist from stockpiling. It is surprising that desisting has apparently not yet begun: this could be because the tax relief on stock appreciation is an incentive to keep up stock levels.

Consumer spending has been lower than expected at the end of last year, so retailers may have built up stocks involuntarily. Bank lending, the major source of excess money growth, will fall off as stockpiling begins.

The Bank emphasizes in the bulletin that, although the target measure for money supply, sterling M3, has recently been growing, outside measures have grown more slowly.

Parts warning on BL-Honda deal

By Clifford Webb

Guest, Keen and Nettlefolds (GKN), Britain's largest motor component group, has warned BL that key components to be imported from Japan for the new Honda/BL car, code-named Bounty, will be in breach of a GKN licence agreement with a Japanese company.

The Honda engine and transmission units, to be installed in a BL-built body, will be fitted with constant velocity joints manufactured by NTN Japan, under licence from GKN. It was the British company's development of this one component which made the Mini possible and led to the worldwide export to front wheel drive cars.

It is understood that NTN's licence prohibits it from exporting the joints to Europe, other than on fully built cars. The subsidiaries for installation in the Bounty, which goes into production at Cowley next

year, are said to be in breach of this restriction.

GKN's intervention is part of a campaign being mounted by United Kingdom component companies to secure work on the Bounty. BL's insistence that 50 per cent will be British sourced is described as "totally misleading". One component manufacturer said last night: "Our indications are that less than 10 per cent of the Bounty will be sourced in the United Kingdom and 90 per cent of that will be done in BL's own factories."

GKN was reluctant to comment last night. A spokesman said: "We do not want to rock the BL boat. We have very cordial relations with them. I can, however, confirm that there are licensing restrictions imposed on NTN relating to certain markets. We are hopeful of winning orders on the Bounty, although probably not on the initial supply."

from GKN and 14 other major component companies—all members of the British Automotive Parts Promotion Council (BAPPC)—will be meeting Mr Ray Horrocks, managing director of BL Cars next Thursday, to express their concern.

Mr John Wardle, director of the BAPPC, said yesterday: "Component firms were quite prepared to bite the bullet and accept Japanese parts when it was intended to produce only 30,000 Bounties a year. But it became a very different proposition when production targets were lifted to 85,000 a year and we learned that the car was to replace existing BL models in which our members have a big stake. As many as 60,000 jobs could be at risk."

The chief executive of a Midlands component group said: "Japanese component firms have been making parts for this car for more than a year on drawings supplied by Honda. Yet neither my firm, nor to the

best of my knowledge, any other British firm, has yet seen a single drawing from BL to enable us to quote for parts."

That is hardly playing the game when the same component people are being asked to commit production capacity to produce parts for use in pre-production models of the LC 10 (BL's planned new medium saloon) before that model has been signed off as a going concern.

In private, BL executives have told component firms that the overriding reason for the scarcity of British parts is Honda's concern that the Bounty must be produced to the highest quality standards so that its own image does not suffer.

For this reason, Honda is insisting that Japanese parts be used. These quality worries have been met. BL hopes to make a phased introduction of British parts.

Hambros will extend Fairey bid deadline

By Philip Robinson

Merchant bankers Hambros is to extend the deadline for its £19.5m takeover offer for Fairey Holdings, owned by the National Enterprise Board, until the end of the month. The bid was due to expire on Friday.

The Hambros decision follows the audited figures from Fairey for 1979 which were disclosed yesterday and showed a slight downturn in pre-tax profits from £5.3m to £5.1m on a near static turnover of £44m.

A spokesman for Hambros said last night: "We are extending the deadline until the end of the month to allow the preconditions of the bid to be satisfied, one of which was the audited figures and the other was a profits forecast for this year which is expected to be available by then."

Just over three weeks ago, the NEB instructed accountants Peat Marwick Mitchell to press on with auditing last year's accounts and look at other ways of disposing of Fairey.

In a statement then, the NEB said the investigation would assist them in examining the Fairey bid and other choices, but stressed that no other firm offers had been received.

However it is now understood that discussions are continuing between the NEB and potential purchasers of either part of the whole of Fairey.

A spokesman for the NEB said last night: "We cannot comment on whether discussions are taking place or not."

A draft form of Peat's report is expected by Friday and the finalised article should be ready in a few weeks. Either way, neither of the two conditions imposed by Hambros when it first launched the bid on February 22 have been fulfilled.

They were pressing for an answer within 28 days and stipulated that during the period no negotiations with any other party should take place. An NEB statement three days after that was taken in the City as a hint that Hambros offer was not high enough and there were now persistent rumours that a number of industrial companies want to buy Fairey Holdings.

Fairey was bought by the NEB for £20 two years ago from the receiver for an open fight with Trafalgar House. It is in the books at £19.1m without any retained profits. A figure nearer £22.5m to £23m, it is thought, would be more favourably received.

CBI wants tougher picketing measures

By Patricia Tisdall

Management representatives and employers' leaders yesterday rejected the Government's proposals to curb secondary industrial action. The influential policy-making council of the Confederation of British Industry decided that stronger measures were needed to curb industrial disruption affecting only the employer involved in a dispute.

The council considers that the proposals made in a working paper issued by Mr James Prior, Secretary of State for Employment, last month, offers too many loopholes to be effective. These would continue to give immunity from civil proceedings to industrial action involving first customers or suppliers who regularly conduct a "substantial part" of their business but who are not themselves party to the dispute.

The CBI's request for tighter measures is to be presented verbally to Mr Prior this morning by John Mathew, the director general. A written submission will be made later.

The decision to reject the proposals as they stand was taken after what Sir John described as a "full and wide

running debate". Many employers are anxious not to delay the progress of the Employment Bill with its existing provisions to ban secondary picketing.

Mr Prior asked for comments on his secondary action proposals to be submitted to him by Friday. In the light of these, he intends to insert a new clause in the Employment Bill now before Parliament but he also intends to publish a Green Paper on the whole question of trade union immunities later in the year.

Consultation prior to the council meeting showed a deep division between employers. Some wanted to shelve the whole question of trade union immunities until the Green Paper was published. Others wanted to get effective curbs on all forms of secondary action inserted at this stage. A third faction was prepared to go along with Mr Prior's proposals on the basis that they could be tightened later.

The 400-strong council, however, was nearly unanimous in its acceptance of a proposal made by Lord Robens, the former National Coal Board chairman, that employers should be required to arrange facilities for secret ballots on company premises.

Belgian bank rate jumps by 2 per cent

From Peter Norman

Brussels, March 19

The Belgian National Bank announced large increases in its key lending rates yesterday to dampen pressure for a devaluation of the franc in the European Monetary System.

Bank rate was raised to 14 per cent from 12 per cent. The penal secondary discount rate charged to commercial banks when they wish to use more than one third of their rediscount quotas was increased to 15 per cent from 13.5 per cent, as was the Lombard rate at which banks obtain monthly advances against collateral.

Interest rates in Belgium were at their highest levels since the Second World War even before today's decisions. Because Belgium's inflation rate is relatively low 6.5 per cent, borrowers are now paying and lenders profiting from unprecedentedly high real interest charges.

The rush of funds into the dollar has left Belgium particularly badly off by reducing the precarious position of the Belgian franc in the European Monetary System. The franc has been subject to heavy speculative selling in anticipation of a devaluation in the EMS.

The Belgian National Bank bought an estimated 20,000 million francs in support operations on the foreign exchange markets last week as the currency pressed against the divergence indicator in the EMS.

The scale of intervention by the Belgian authorities since the beginning of this year is thought to have been around 60,000 million francs, or more than half last year's total of 113,000 million francs.

More US banks follow prime rate lead to 19 pc

From Frank Vogel

US Economics Correspondent

Washington, March 19

The outlook for the American economy appears to be becoming increasingly confused by the hour. Torrents of new announcements by financial institutions, Congressional leaders and government departments, are adding to the complexity of the already complicated economic picture.

Citibank and numerous other large banks today followed the lead set by Chase Manhattan yesterday and raised their prime lending rates to 19 per cent. But credit analysts found it difficult today to predict where rates may now be heading, because of the reactions of money markets, funds and credit card issuers to the latest Federal Reserve Board measures.

Some money market funds announced that they were temporarily ceasing to accept new accounts pending a review of the implications of the Fed's decision to impose a 15 per cent reserve requirement on increases in the assets of these funds. Then some credit card issuers said they were considering raising interest charges, or shortening repayment periods, or curbing credit extensions, after the Fed's decision.

These steps may indeed have the effect the Fed desires and restrain credit growth. So too may the depressed state of the housing market, where new

housing starts are now at the lowest level in four years, according to Commerce Department figures. On Wall Street the prevailing opinion seems to be that the prime rate will go still higher, but an increasing number of analysts are now talking of rates peaking quite soon and possibly falling quite rapidly as a deep recession develops.

New figures out today provided support both for those predicting a big recession and for those supporting the White House view that the slump will be mild. Final gross national product data for the last 1979 quarter shows an annual real rate of growth of two per cent and Commerce Department officials suggested that a higher rate may be seen in the current quarter.

While the White House still reflects upon which precise programmes to cut in the 1981 fiscal year, Mr Robert Giano, chairman of the House of Representatives committee on the budget, yesterday issued a laundry list of cuts totalling \$16,400m (£7,488m) along with proposals for \$5,500m (£2,511m) revenue increases.

The White House list of spending cuts, which is due out at the end of the month, might be similar, but there is absolutely no telling at this time which spending plan the full Congress will finally approve.

Gold back to \$500 level

Gold jumped back over the \$500 an ounce level yesterday amid hectic activity. The new interest came as the dollar weakened slightly on foreign

exchange markets. The gold price ended \$38.5 up on the day at \$519.50. The dollar came back from lows to close little changed at \$2.1930 to the pound.

£27.8m drop in Tubes pretax profit

By Ronald Pullen

Tube Investments yesterday added its tale of woe to a steadily worsening profits being reported by several large British manufacturing companies.

Pretax profits of the Birmingham-based steel tube, domestic appliances and cycles group dropped from \$80m to £52.2m last year. It blamed most of the downturn on industrial disputes with the road haulage strike affecting the first half of its year and the engineering strike last autumn cutting profits a further £20m.

In addition high interest rates pushed up interest charges more than £6m to £13.5m, and the strength of sterling squeezed export margins and increased import competition for many products.

Sir Brian Kellert, chairman of TI, yesterday urged that "there should be differential interest rates for exports" because of the current very high cost of financing exports.

The group's Round Oak Steel Works moved into a loss last year because of lower steel demand, but Sir Brian said that thanks to imports and better working practices the group was weathering the steel strike reasonably well.

Poor trading conditions have forced TI to make 2,000 of its 55,000 United Kingdom labour force redundant, and a further 500 jobs have gone through natural wastage. The cycles division, where Raleigh yesterday reported a £14.6m turnaround into losses of £6.2m, has borne the brunt of this with the loss of 1,000 jobs, and a further 850 jobs will be lost in 1980.

Helped by a 7 per cent increase in the dividend to 36.4p gross, the shares rose 6p to 278p on the stockmarket.

Financial Editor, page 29

PRICE CHANGES

Mines 45c to 395c
2p to 16p
Antic 521 to 511
Gold 60c to 495c
et 80c to 760c

Lease 50c to 320c
Metals Explorer 5p to 66p
Premier Cons 5p to 66p
Rustenburg 25p to 215p
Sentrust 50c to 663c

McIntirey Prop 2p to 18p
Streeters 2p to 18p
Sungel Besi 10p to 250p
Vosper 10p to 150p
Weir Group 15p to 41p

THE POUND

	Bank	Bank
	buys	sells
is 5	2.06	1.95
Sch	20.50	20.00
Fr	72.50	69.00
2	2.63	2.55
dk Kr	13.28	12.73
fr	6.90	6.50
fr	4.30	4.25
ly Din	48.00	44.00
us \$	11.45	10.25
Yd	1.12	1.09
Yen	1965.00	1875.00
Yen	569.00	544.00

Shortages ahead unless search for new wells speeds up

Oilmen foresee troubled waters

Offshore oil and gas exploration levels are far too low, and unless there is a substantial increase soon, a serious oil shortage will develop in the 1990s, the Government was told yesterday.

The United Kingdom Offshore Operators Association said unless last year's level of 33 exploration wells drilled was doubled or trebled serious shortages would develop.

Despite some increase in exploration, the level was still far too low in relation to the prospective offshore acreage and the United Kingdom's oil needs until the end of the century.

The association's warning comes at a time when a leap in profits has focused new attention on the activities of the major oil companies. It is

seen as a thinly veiled warning to Sir Geoffrey Howe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to take account of the industry's fears that some of the profits might be siphoned-off through an increase in Petroleum Revenue Tax in the Budget next week.

The association said the oil surplus forecast for this decade was equivalent only to about one year's consumption in the United Kingdom. The Government should licence significantly more blocks for exploration.

It said only about 10 per cent of the United Kingdom continental shelf was licensed for drilling. But the Department of Energy, which last night was considering the association's statement, noted that considerable more blocks would be

opened up for exploration when the seventh round of offshore licences is implemented.

There are 24 exploration rigs at work in the North Sea, with four appraisal and six exploration wells being drilled.

In a clear reference next week's Budget the association called for government policies which would give the industry confidence to invest; and said that this was likely to be several times more than the £15,000 million which had been invested so far.

A stable tax policy was essential. Companies were concerned that the Government wanted the option of acquiring 51 per cent of all oil produced from the latest licensing round.

Peter Hill

Listening Post

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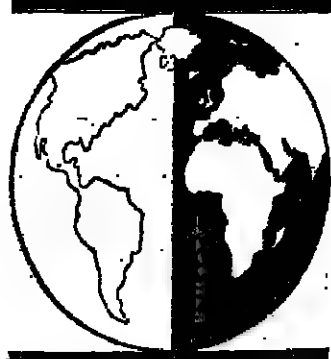
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US opposed to curb on Japanese car imports

America is opposed to restricting car imports from Japan, either through legislation or voluntary restraints. Mr Reubin Askew, President Carter's special trade representative said.

He told a Congress ways and means subcommittee, that Japanese imports had risen because of consumer demand for small, fuel-efficient quality cars. It would take the American car industry several more years to produce an adequate supply of such cars.

Mexico oil output

Mr Jose Lopez Portillo, Mexico's president, said he wants the country's oil output to exceed an earlier self-imposed 1980 ceiling. The increased flow would partly offset cutbacks planned by Opec members. He urged oil workers to try to produce between 2.5 and 2.7 million barrels daily this year.

Finland trade deficit

Finland's trade ran into a deficit of 365m Finnish marks (154m) in February from a 422m Finnish marks surplus a year earlier. Exports totalled 3,796m Finnish marks, up 35 per cent from a year earlier, but imports totalled 4,161m Finnish marks, up 74 per cent from a year before.

Italy-Poland talks

Italy's state oil group ENI said it is discussing linking with Poland for research into coal gasification and liquefaction. Italy is interested in importing coal from Poland and liquefaction would improve transport as well as being of use in the chemical industry.

Car production fall

Car output in West Germany in February totalled 329,700 units, down 6 per cent compared with February 1979. Truck production, however, was up about 2 per cent at 28,700 units. Exports totalled 195,000 vehicles, up 3.8 per cent from February 1979.

Applying more computer power to the desk top

Steps towards the electronic office

The trend towards the integrated, electronics-based office of the future is emphasized today with the announcement by Philips Industries of the merging of four previously separate companies into a single group, to be known as Philips Business Systems.

Separately, the four companies have sold telephones, telephone switching systems, office computers, and other office equipment. Together, they are now moving towards the increasingly integrated systems which will link various kinds of communications and information processing in business in the years to come.

The companies are Plessey TMC (telephone systems and instruments and viewdata terminals); Philips Data Systems (office computers and terminals); Plessey Business Communications (computer-based business telephone systems, intercom, public address, paging and closed-circuit television); and Philips Business Equipment (dictation machines, word processors and electronic accounting machines).

Mr Brian Manley, managing director of Philips Business Systems, said yesterday that he expected the fastest-growing part of the business systems industry in the next decade to be in communication-based

equipment. Telecommunications, he argued, would form the basis of the electronic office.

The market would evolve in two stages, Mr Manley forecast. First, an increase in the amount of "stand-alone" equipment, increasingly with "intelligent communications" added. Secondly, the integration of individual pieces of equipment.

This second stage would lead, in the 1990s, to complete intercommunication between terminals handling word and data processing, audio and message transmission, data and text storage, and a range of "personal computing" functions.

Major growth, he said, would be based more and more on applying computer power at the desk. The new group's turnover for this year will be more than £100m. By 1984 the aim is to raise this to more than £200m, with the Philips share of the market rising from about 17 per cent now to about 22 per cent in 1984.

Mr Manley is aware that instant integration—for Philips as for customers—is not possible. "We plan progressively to integrate over the next two years," he said yesterday, with the emphasis this year on improving the group's overall servicing operation.

Headquarters of the new group will be in Maidenhead, Berkshire. Telecommunications manufacturing includes factories at Malmesbury and Aldridge, Lancashire. A further 250 jobs are to be created by the group in Scotland as part of a £3m investment there.

Britain is the scene for this. Philips' first major move along the much-debated "convergence" route (the convergence being that between computing, telecommunications, and office systems), but the same approach is likely to follow in other parts of the Dutch-based organization.

The same approach is also likely to be reflected in moves by other companies in the business systems industries. Plessey Telecommunications changed its name to Plessey Business Systems last year for much the same reason.

In particular, Plessey and Philips share a basic assumption in their planning for the future market for office systems. This is the belief that the computerized private automatic branch exchange (PABX)—or, as Mr Manley called it yesterday, the "business switch"—will be at the heart of all the forthcoming integrated systems.

Kenneth Owen

Ministers admit delay on BNOC legislation

By Nicholas Hirst

Government Ministers have now accepted it is impossible to introduce legislation to invite private capital into the British National Oil Corporation in the present parliamentary session.

Instead Mr David Howell, Secretary of State for Energy, is expected to make a statement before the Easter recess outlining plans for legislation to be brought in probably in the autumn.

The delay results from numerous complexities in creating a BNOC exploration and production company in which the public can invest separately from the oil trading arm. This means that there will be no chance of a sale happening in time to reduce the public sector borrowing requirement for 1980/81.

Ministers within the Department of Energy, however, believe that it is worth going ahead with the scheme even though by 1981/82 BNOC will be paying substantial revenues into the Exchequer and the net benefit to the PSBR will be considerably less than in 1980/81 when it is estimated that the

sale of shares representing a third of the North Sea assets might raise £700m.

Mr Howell is understood to believe that the central point is to offer the public the chance to invest directly in the nation's North Sea assets and that this overrides considerations of financing the PSBR.

If the plan could be put into effect for 1980/81 both aims could have been achieved. An alternative offer offering shares—to offer a loan stock with an added royalty payment—was considered but this did not reduce the PSBR and it missed the main criterion of giving the public a chance of direct ownership in a BNOC's offshore interest.

The decision to go ahead with the share offer even though it will not take place in the most attractive year is regarded as a political victory for Mr Howell. Meanwhile, discussions between the industry and the Department of Energy, including the role of BNOC, could be delaying an announcement of the details of the seventh round of licensing of 70 new exploration blocks.

One-for-four scrip issue from Relyon

Relyon PBWS, the bedding manufacturer, has turned in a 29 per cent sales increase and a 24 per cent rise in pretax profits for 1979.

Sales rose from £10.1m to £13.1m while pretax profits rose from £1.5m to £1.85m. At the trading level, the rate of profits increase rises to 28 per cent from £1.6m to £2.1m but there is a depreciation charge of £225,000 compared with £128,000.

The board also announced a one-for-four scrip issue. The final dividend is 5.36p making a total of 8.57p

Imports mean losses for chemical industry

By John Huxley

Car imports during 1979 cost chemical manufacturers in the United Kingdom sales of at least £73m, according to a leading industrialist.

Mr Norman Mischler, chairman of Hoechst UK, said that the estimate was conservative. It was based on the loss of sales of paint, plastic components and other products for almost one million cars. This was only one example of the damaging effect on the chemicals industry being caused by erosion of its customer base.

Having a lower customer base at home and greater export hurdles abroad, the United Kingdom chemical industry—with its higher energy, and in some cases higher feedstock costs, rising labour costs, and decreasing capital investments—will inevitably face increasing imports at lower unit cost in the future.

Mr Mischler, who was introducing Hoechst UK's annual profit figures, said: "A realistic energy policy in the United States would solve many of the world's problems and not least those facing the West European chemical industry."

Cheap American imports are blamed for the continuing difficulties of Hoechst's fibres business at Limerick in Northern Ireland, which is operating well below full capacity. Although it remained in the black during 1979, it is expected to record a loss, despite restructuring, in 1980.

Hoechst UK, a subsidiary of the West German chemicals manufacturer, made a profit of £21.3m before tax last year, 15 per cent up on 1978. Turnover was up by 12 per cent, from £352m to £393m. The effect of high lending rates is indicated by the 15 per cent increase over the year in interest paid.

Total turnover by all Hoechst interests in the United Kingdom—which include Oxyne, Roussel Laboratories, Harlow Chemical and the fibres business—was £469m.

Poor growth prospects in Britain are reflected in the "disappointingly small" increase in capital investment this year. A sum of £11.5m had been approved, and most of this will go on refurbishment and achieving productivity improvements.

Mr Mischler said the German parent had not rejected investment suggestions. Rather, it was difficult in the present circumstances to put forward worthwhile projects.

Chemicals profits: A report published yesterday suggests that profitability in the chemicals industry is greatest in companies where capital intensity per employee is high and where employees are highly paid. According to Management Statistics, produced by Dun & Bradstreet, the business information company, a 10 per cent improvement in worker productivity can yield a 30 per cent increase in profits.

Casinos gamble on their own survival

Britain's £1,000m a year casino business is still staking money on its own future. Despite close scrutiny from the police and the prospect of even closer scrutiny from betting officials, gaming companies are defying the loss of big-spending gamblers who have been deterred by the high level of sterling.

The Gaming Board has received 89 applications for certificates of consent to run new casinos. As a matter of policy, it does not disclose how many have been approved; but one has gone to Grand Metropolitan's Mecca Sportsman chain to set it on the path to opening a casino in the London Hilton in Mayfair.

Other certificates are believed to have been granted in London, and these could, if the projects receive approval from licensing authorities, there are 23, and all are experiencing a levelling out of business.

Once there were 26, but now with the three prestigious Ladbroke casinos closed through licensing objections, there are 23, and all are experiencing a levelling out of business.

Big gamblers, which, to a casino manager, means someone with a credit limit of £100,000, are scarce. And the fall in tourism, which resulted from the high level of sterling, naturally has led to a fall in the takings of a business traditionally reliant on visitors for most of its income.

In addition, there is the possibility of a gaming tax increase in the Budget, and the probability of further pressure from the Gaming Board to investigate more closely existing casino operations.

Last year saw a dramatic increase in the level of casino gambling. The total "drop", the amount spent on chips, was £918.5m, 26 per cent up on the previous year. London accounted for £690m of the total.

Mr Philip Isaacs, Mecca Sportsman's chairman, said yesterday: "There was definitely a fall in tourism during the last part of last year and that has obviously affected business. But overall we are not concerned. Last year, though there is no fundamental increase of big players coming in."

"There is certainly no massive decline in gaming, but conversely there has been no massive increase either."

Mecca could be running its new casino from the Hilton on the grounds that it receives the go-ahead from the licensing justices. Mr Isaacs said the application was not connected with the fall in the number of London casinos; it had been planned before Ladbroke's ran into licensing problems.

David Hewson

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Britain's policy on shipbuilding remains too little, too late

From Sir William Lithgow

Sir, No successful industrial nation has a Civil Service quite like ours. Your report of evidence to the Commons Public Accounts Committee gives the version according to Sir Peter Carey of what has gone wrong with British Shipbuilders. It reveals underlying causes of the British disease.

British governments and those who serve them do not understand how industry works, a point made very forcibly to me by one of Dr Richard's closest economic advisers years ago. Many believe that investment in productive resources is possible without the generation of profit, while the white collar attitude is that losses must be equated with poor productivity of labour, never with excessive overheads.

Let me rebut Sir Peter's attempt to place the blame for British Shipbuilders' catastrophic losses under his aegis on the former management in the industry, many of whom are no longer alive to defend their record. Britons have acted as technical and management consultants to successful new ventures all over the world, to the immense benefit of the British equipment industries. Who played the key role in engineering the South Korean miracle?

I entered an industry bruised and apprehensive after the terrible inter-war depression years in which British economic policy led to vital productive areas of the economy and society suffering awfully. Others, particularly those in the nation's overheads, were comfortably insulated. I entered an industry, exhausted by the effort needed to save this island nation in the last war, which by then was being sabotaged by Government policy which starved home industry while steel was exported to foreign competitors.

We were soon face to face with the industrial reality of

the old British policy of a banker's economy. An overvalued pound was to compete with an under-valued yen; unlike Germany, there were no compensating economic factors (in 1980 Marie Antoinette is back in Whitehall). British shipyards invested in modern facilities most of what they earned, and often more than what they could earn, on their own recognisances, competing for labour and management with people in sheltered industries; many being overseas companies established here at the tax-payers' expense.

Sir Peter's own department is still falling over itself to attract inward investment with taxpayers' money. Many British industrial groups like my own, with successful track records, are still waiting to have returned their own capital, capital we invested in the businesses and facilities nationalized nearly three years ago on the basis of values six years ago when money was worth 2½ times what it is worth today. The interminable delays in Sir Peter's department and failure to meet the timetables laid down by Parliament, we are told, are due to our unreasonableness in not accepting that these assets should, effectively be sequestered.

Britain's policy towards shipbuilding, as with most productive industries, has consistently been one of the little too late. The warnings of those who actually work in the engine room of the economy are ignored in favour of the intellectual theorists in London. There is a deal of difference between the world of the international market place with barbed wire entanglements of national politics and aspirations. Capital goods industry and especially shipbuilding suffered application from the effects of British financial incompetence and runaway inflation on the fixed prices demanded by a world market.

The Permanent Secretary should know that the last two Labour administrations, shipbuilding was in a total policy free zone for as long as 10 years; now the prize is being reaped. Other sectors have not been so fortunate. The dominant factor in the devastating cost of a trial staff (about the size of the EEC's intervention fund) and absorption of time and resources in the yards without their own funds. Sir Peter, advantaged in the information available to him about the formance of central

The economic advantage in what one does who one has, but who do without and who do without. People count the hats as well caps.

I now have no doubts the shipbuilding companies bears my name. Chairman of an industry which includes a successful shipyard and substantial numbers of each year from the meat of new technology markets. We are still work selling British and know-how through the yards, creating the "pay" the Westminster laundry bills.

Our foreign campaign friends are the operators Whitehall and the "We" laundry—when they are washing dirty they please close the door. WILLIAM J. LITHGOW, PO Box 2, Port Glasgow, Renfrewshire, PA14 5J March 13.

'Silly monetarism' hurts the small businessman

From Mr Edward Frewin

Sir, My wife and I run a small business. We began trading in 1967 and by working hard over six and seven days a week 51 weeks of the year we created nine new jobs, five filled from the ranks of the unemployed. We are proud that about 30 per cent of our products are exported and it would, therefore, not be immediate for us to say that we are doing our bit for the country's balance of payments as well as the unemployment problem.

This present Government was partly elected on its candidates' vocal support for the job-creating small-business community. We were naturally excited to know where this help would first manifest itself. The only piece of legislation we can find was the abolition of the requirement for small businesses to re-employ a female staff member after her confinement. I believe this is where the Government's help began and ended.

To balance this legislation we have the following list to contend with:

1. Usurer's interest rates, making our £50,000 overdraft virtually impossible to service and creating the unbelievable

rent of £347 per sq ft for warehouse.

2. An overvalued pound preventing us from selling into many countries but particularly North America.

3. Increased VAT which caused a dramatic collapse in the home market.

4. Increased National Health contributions to add to our already rapidly increasing wages bill caused by 18 per cent inflation.

5. 20 per cent increases in office and factory rates.

6. Further "increases" in our overheads from electricity, telephone and the existing postal charges.

7. Now, past and planned increases in petrol prices puts our representatives' jobs in jeopardy.

These items were all directly caused by this Government's silly monetarism policy. I, in common with most of the business community in this country, cannot wait for the return of the sensible policies of maintaining the delicate balance between monetarism and planning the economy.

Yours faithfully, EDWARD FREWIN, Cleare's Cottage, Waltham St Lawrence, Reading RG10 0NL.

Irony of plan to end The Money Programme

From Mr Richard Wainwright, MP, Mr Nicholas Scott, MP, and Mr Robert Cant, MP

Sir, We have learned with alarm of the proposal by the BBC to end *The Money Programme*.

In the 12 years since its debut, *The Money Programme* has established a deserved reputation for informed and informative weekly reporting of national and international economic affairs.

The programme performs an important function in explaining complicated economic ideas simply and well.

As the realities of Britain's economic position come more and more to dominate our politics, it seems to us perverse to cut the one programme designed specifically to report on industry and the economy.

The BBC appears to be flying in the face of the recommendation of the Anson Committee that coverage of business and industry should be extended, not cut.

It is ironic that it should be the BBC's economic coverage that is the latest victim of economies.

Yours faithfully, RICHARD WAINWRIGHT, Liberal Treasury Spokesman; NICHOLAS SCOTT, Chairman, Conservative Employment Committee; ROBERT CANT, Chairman, Labour Finance and Economic Affairs Committee; House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

Retailers and benefit of stock relief

From Mr P. G. Kaufman

Sir, In a recent article in *Business News* (Feb 5) about leasing, it was stated that "like banks and finance companies, retailers get no benefit from stock appreciation relief". In fact, retailers have profited very considerably from stock relief, which has undoubtedly been a major factor in helping to finance store openings and development programmes.

Leading firms, such as Sainsbury, Tesco and Marks & Spencer.

I am somewhat surprised that the error in the article has, apparently, not been the subject of comment to you from anyone in the above-mentioned and/or other large retail groups.

I, therefore, hope that this letter will serve to correct any mistaken impressions.

Yours truly, P. G. KAUFMAN, Pontresina, Park View Road, Woldingham, Surrey CR3 7DE. March 18.

The benefit of bank profits

From the Confederation of Staff Associations

Sir, I hope that the servative members of the Conservative Party Government to introduce additional tax upon bank will reconsider their.

High interest rates are causing difficulties for bank customers. However, it is not the bank's support in marginal conditions if it is effective and profit, then it is being diminished in suggested.

Those who work know better than I know the importance of the savings industry, particularly in times of unemployment.

The fact that such benefits not only the bank but the community shown by the famous played by banking balance of payments. A when there is growing at rising imports and subsidies for exporters balance is of increasing importance. The use of securities to enhance this trend another compelling against an extra tax.

It must be a particular of irritation to bank as presented by unions with the council should also advocate a tax. I feel that those too, will support our objection.

A more constructive by those concerned with interest rates might be consideration in more detail actions being taken to bring about a fall.

Yours faithfully, R. D. L. TYE, President, Confederation of Bank Associations.

2, Heath Drive, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 2EZ. March 18.

BP investor

From Mr David D. Fitzpatrick

Sir I took up the Governor's invitation last October to come a small, even history shareholder, in BP.

As Chancellor now to state basis of taxation on my part I would regard myself a victim of a confidence in your sincerity.

DAVID D. FITZPATRICK, 3 Halkam Chase, Eddcliffe Vale Road, Sheffield S10 3EW. March 18.

F. Pratt Engineering Corporation Limited

THE 28th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WAS HELD ON 19 MARCH. THE FOLLOWING POINTS WERE HIGHLIGHTED BY THE CHAIRMAN, MR A. M. C. BALLEWAT-PRATT, F.R.S.

TRADING RESULTS: The group improved its profitability in the second half of the year in spite of industrial unrest and high cost of borrowings.

DIVIDEND: A final of 3.8p per share will be paid to shareholders for the year 8p compared with 5.37p for the previous year.

OUTLOOK: The current year started with a good order book and, with the precautionary measures taken to counter worst effects of the steel strike, the first half should reflect improvement in the second half of last year. There is evidence of a reduced rate of ordering both by U.K. and overseas customers, and it is therefore not yet possible to predict what will be our achievement for the full year.

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BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

TI in the doldrums

engineering strike last autumn has every bit as debilitating as TI feared for the major part of the £27.8m to £52.2m in full year pre-tax profits. Almost halved second-half profits to £1.8m, TI would have in any case been pushed to get close to 1978's performance which was the culmination of several streamlining of its activities.

The rest of TI's results are indicative of what is happening to much of the rest of the Kingdom manufacturing industry: a cost of money pushed up interest; a just over £6m to £13.5m net while a good of sterling has eaten into export and given imports a helping hand.

only division to have done any better on domestic appliances whose pre-tax profits went up from £9m to £15.3m group improved its market share. rise it was a case of which of the divisions could limit the damage of the spring strike best.

se event steel tubes took the brunt of trading profits almost halved to while perhaps the most disappointing has come from cycles and toys there was a £11.6m turnaround to of £3.6m.

ed the position of the Raleigh cycle is even worse than these figures with poor overseas markets in Nigeria and the strength of a turning last year's profit of £8.4m to £6.2m loss.

t affected was the aluminium side volume gains helped to offset the of industrial disputes and higher and British Aluminium, TI's 58 per cent subsidiary, yesterday reported a drop in pre-tax profits to £20.6m, making no predictions about the current but looks to be just as exposed to downturn in the economy as any other this stage most analysts are unwilling to back last year's profits which to 1978's profits of £60m to £85m.

after last year's £27.9m rise in capital and a net cash outflow of £1.2m, the balance sheet is still quite strong with shareholders' funds of £100.2m down 27.6 per cent. But another cash outflow this year, the is hardly in a position to fund its capital spending and the rumours of a takeover of Crane Packaging which would cost £75m even after asset disposals of so last year.

the moment though TI is crossing its fingers and hoping that its decision to raise dividend will be justified by rising billings even though last year's 7 per cent increase to 36.4p gross is only twice on historic earnings and ridiculously low on a CCA earnings loss of £1.5m.

as Tilling

t fruits

1 America

fruits of Thomas Tilling's £70m acquisition programme in the United States account for four-fifths of the pre-tax profits increase to £81.1m. was more than the market bargained for given that the United States figures in most cases for only eight months. It provides fairly ample justification for summer's £57m rights issue, which 5 per cent of the shares left with the writers was dubbed the flop of the

so the shares up 9p to 133p are still low the rights price. This partly a fear of a continuing overhang of half by sub-underwriters—although a deal weighting problems have been unwound by now—as well as that Tilling may not have yet slaked its thirst. ever, notwithstanding Tilling's attempts to buy into the United States conductor industry through a £19m offer, further acquisition moves should be restricted to "in-filling" purchases in the group has already invaded. while, events in the United States last summer have made Tilling look a canny buyer indeed having financed acquisitions on fixed rate borrowings for 10 per cent while retaining hefty margins at home.

ough interest payments have surged from £9.8m to £22.5m gearing remains relatively modest with borrowings up £61m

to £152m representing 34 per cent of shareholders' funds.

All of which leaves the group in strong shape to face recessionary conditions. Last year builders merchandising and industrial equipment apparently made much of the running on the profits front, while textiles and construction held up strongly. After a mild winter the group claims to have made a strong start to this year and with an additional boost from United States earnings hopes must be for further profits growth of perhaps 15 per cent to around £93m.

Given this prospect, the shares yielding 7½ per cent and on a fully taxed p/e ratio of under 8—on stated earnings—could soon surge through the psychological 138p rights price barrier, general market conditions permitting.

Bejam

It may slow down

The lukewarm reception accorded to Bejam's 50 per cent rise in interim profits serves as a sharp reminder of fears that the frozen food retailer may be going ex-growth.

Profits of £4.10m before tax were a good £50,000 above top estimates) but on a relatively firm day in the market, Bejam shares ended the day only 1p higher at 59p.

The rise in profits and stiffening of profit margins was due to a sizeable rise in volume sales of frozen food. In existing stores this was a full 20 per cent.

Inflation provides a strong incentive for consumers to fill up their freezers, the product range has been extended and delivered, and there were benefits still accruing from the transport strike which stimulated the frozen food market.

But the doubts about Bejam reflect longer-term fears, and are two-fold. First, will freezer centres lose out in the still growing frozen food market as consumers switch to smaller pack items bought through supermarkets?

Second, has the group misjudged its move into fast food? Of the 35 restaurants bought for £4.8m from EMI the group is now selling all but thirteen. The first eight to go have already realised a useful profit over book value and Bejam will be left with some prime sites. But its MacDonalds-style hamburger bars and fish and chip shops will not contribute much to profits before 1981-82.

Assuming full-year profits of about £73m the fully-taxed p/e ratio is a testing 11.6 and the yield 5.3 per cent. Fears that Bejam will start losing out in frozen food, may well prove overdone. But given the sharply divergent market views and the long wait for fast-food profits, the shares could be in for a dull period.

Dividends

They have to 'real' too...

The fresh bout of inflation and (at last) some common ground and firm recommendations from the accountancy bodies about how companies should treat inflation in their accounts will have important implications for dividends. Or at least, they should once the message gets home.

That message is simple. If dividend paying capacity is related to the inflation adjusted earnings level of a company, then on the basis of some of the results we are seeing from the manufacturing sector alone at the moment, some companies should not be paying anything at all, let alone maintaining or even raising dividends.

The Bank of England, in a detailed Quarterly Bulletin analysis of dividend trends, adds weight to this argument, noting that the experience of the inflationary years during the 1970s may suggest that companies have been misled into over-distribution through insufficient attention to the decline in their "real" profits.

The Bank underlines the danger which many have suspected that although management may have used historic cost accounting as a benchmark for their ability to pay dividends ED24 calculations, which are in the process of final agreement (with luck), deserve much more prominence.

Economic notebook

More mud slinging in prospect

The Tories may have been shocked at the size of the swing against them at Southend last week. But by the time the Chancellor sits down after delivering his second Budget speech next Wednesday, they will doubtless be grateful to have caught Southend before the tide recedes still further.

For what has become increasingly clear since last autumn is that this is going to be a Budget that will win the Chancellor precious few friends. It is going to be one that will earn monetarism a lot more enemies.

This is not without its ironies. In the first place, the Chancellor should be far better placed to defend a stringent monetary policy than at any time since the Tories took office. With Spring in the air, well, it was a surprise of sorts to see back-monetarist governments seem suddenly to be flowering all over the western world.

Indeed, President Carter and the Federal Reserve Board could hardly have done Sir Geoffrey Howe more proud. If one had proposed the present scenario even a few months ago, one would have been instantly dismissed as insane. Yet here we have a Democratic president, deep in an election campaign, being not just of reducing the fiscal deficit but of balancing the federal budget and significant monetary expansion, even at the expense of interest rates nudging 20 per cent.

Doubtless the Chancellor will be quick to allude to what is happening overseas policy and put his monetary policy into perspective. The plain fact of the matter, however, is that what may be going on elsewhere is not going to provide much comfort to people in Britain. Monetary policy is unpopular because it is starting to hurt, and as it starts to hurt even more, the mud-slinging will increase. It is as simple as that.

The second irony, of course, is that the present government neither invented monetarism nor holds any copyright to it. Credit policies have passed as policy for monetarism for donkey's years; and it was the last government which introduced monetary policy here along its present lines.

Shocked

In the mid-seventies, however, people were somewhat readier to take their medicine. They had undoubtedly been shocked by the experience of an annual inflation rate marching towards 30 per cent; they had seen the pound plummet; they knew that the International Monetary Fund had attached strings to its loans, and they had both the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to hold up as a scapegoat and the knowledge that it was only a matter of time before our own black gold started to flow ashore.

The trouble, of course, was that the Labour government not only botched its incomes policy but then compounded the error by allowing Mr Healey to present a totally reckless Budget that threw away much of the ground that had been so painfully won.

The trouble, of course, was that the Labour government not only botched its incomes policy but then compounded the error by allowing Mr Healey to present a totally reckless Budget that threw away much of the ground that had been so painfully won.

The willingness of people to accept further discomfort as we move into "disinflation, round two" is understandably less strong. In part that reflects an inevitable reaction to a government policy which is based on a belief that, by and large, market forces should be left to determine the appropriate degree of individual belt-tightening. More generally, it

reflects a widespread disbelief that any belt tightening can really be necessary now that North Sea oil production has built up virtually to the point at which we can count ourselves self-sufficient.

That said, there is absolutely no sign of the leadership backing down from a policy that requires sustained deceleration in the nominal demand for money and, by implication, a sustained squeeze on the real money supply for several years to come.

Some parts of the party may be more susceptible to political flak than others, but at the top at least for the time being, it would seem that the armour is more likely to be pierced by a heavy-weight intellectual argument than very much else. To date the anti-monetarist artillery has not proved particularly coordinated or impressive.

Certainly, one would expect to see some adaptation to the Government's "market forces" position—as opposed to its monetary control stance—were the overall strategy not starting to produce some tangible results by the end of this year. But the prospects of the carter being turned some time this summer still look reasonably good.

Target

Clearly, any plan to reduce both the monetary growth rate, either from April or October, and to reduce interest rates into the bargain is more likely to live comfortably with a public sector borrowing requirement below rather than above £9,000m. (Presumably the Government will have to make allowances somewhere along the line for the effects on sterling M3 of re-intermediation following the expected phasing out of the "corset".)

Even if the Government does set out a credible fiscal and monetary mix next week, that does not guarantee it against potential complications on the monetary front over the coming financial year. A too rapid fall in interest rates would, for instance, present potential problems unless improvements are made to the Government's debt funding system.

More interesting, though, are the possible "problems" arising from flows across the exchange. Quite rightly, the Government is going to try to curb the United Kingdom's credit appetite to a level at which overseas investors are no longer magnetically drawn towards sterling, thus pushing up the exchange rate or increasing the banks' lending resources. What happens, however, once the domestic demand for credit starts to subside and interest rates to fall?

It may be that the overseas investors will want to continue to hold sterling as a pet currency or on grounds of confidence in the Government's economic policy. But if money starts to look for high-yielding homes elsewhere, and there are plenty of them around now, the implication for a government with a penchant for limited foreign exchange intervention, holding back sterling, must be a sobering one.

The medium term point for monetary policy is, of course, the most useful treatment of mounting North Sea oil flows. It is something we might have been discussing already had the last government not relaxed its grip. As it is, the role of the North Sea for the next twelve months at least is going to be substantially one of aiding disinflation in a way that might otherwise have had to be done through still more average public spending cuts and significantly higher income tax.

John Whitmore

VAT payments: will Mrs Thatcher break the law?

'The national interest would best be served by withholding our total contribution'

If Mrs Thatcher fails to get agreement on a satisfactory reduction in Britain's contribution to the EEC budget and carries out her threat to withhold the value-added tax payment to the Community she would certainly be breaking the law.

Much less clear is what the rest of the EEC could do about it. The inability of the European Commission to enforce Community law has already been demonstrated by France's six-month-old defiance of the European Court over lamb imports.

One suggestion is that the EEC might retaliate by withholding payments to Britain from the Community's agricultural, regional and social funds. But it seems likely that such action would require the unanimous support of the Council of Ministers, and that could be vetoed by Britain.

The right to veto to protect "a vital national interest" was conceded in 1956 to bring an end to a six-months French boycott of Community meetings ordered by General de Gaulle because of a dispute over the future of the common agricultural policy. There is no legal appeal against the use of the veto.

There are three elements in members' states' contributions to the EEC budget revenue. These are the common customs duties and levies collected on industrial and agricultural imports into the community, supplemented by the proceeds of VAT levied at a rate of up to 1 per cent on an agreed list of goods and services.

VAT is predicted to account for 45 per cent of Britain's gross

make no difference however to the illegality of the British posture.

Whatever amount of money was withheld by Britain would have to be made up by the other eight member states, about 80 per cent of the gap being met by Germany and 30 per cent by France.

The EEC customs duties and levies are an integral consequence of the collective decision to establish a customs union and are in a real sense not "our money" (to borrow Mrs Thatcher's notorious phrase) but a resource of the EEC as a whole.

By contrast, VAT is essentially a national resource, a small portion of which member states have agreed to transfer to the Community kitty. Britain might argue that this agreement was no longer valid in the absence of action by other member states to keep the British budget contribution within reasonable bounds.

This is not an argument likely to cut much ice with the EEC's lawyers, however. If Britain is going to break the law anyway, it could therefore be argued that the national interest would best be served by withholding our total contribution and causing the maximum possible financial disruption.

This would be technically possible but it would plunge the EEC in such a profound political and financial crisis that it would be doubtful whether the Community could survive.

Britain's gross contribution to the EEC budget this year is expected to account for 20 per cent of the total.

Michael Hornsby

Our favourite vices are still cheap

Derek Harris

The Chancellor, it has been argued rather desperately, may resist the temptation next week to make swingeing increases on drinks and tobacco because of a fine effects on the retail price index.

Drinkers, smokers and drivers always feel hard done by in Budgets, but the truth is that over the years they have been treated relatively lightly. If excise duties were indexed to take account of inflation, their indulgences would be a lot more costly.

Indexation from the last time duties were increased gives some idea of how lightly they have escaped. For example, drinks duties were last increased in January 1977 and to gear them up in line with inflation would, Treasury estimates, mean increasing revenue yield in the following manner:

Spirits would rise by £1.40 a bottle, bringing in £30m. Beer would go up 31p a pint, drawing in £35m. Wine would rise by 22p a bottle, which would bring the Treasury a further £50m.

Tobacco duties last went up in April of the same year. Indexation would demand a 33 per cent rise, raising another £430m in duties, the equivalent of 11p on a packet of 20 king-size cigarettes.

Increases of this magnitude are perhaps unlikely in this Budget. Had Sir Geoffrey wanted to compensate for inflation since 1977, he would almost certainly have introduced some degree of indexing in last year's Budget.

One logical step for him to take would be to increase duties by 17.2 per cent, in line with last year's inflation rate. This tax allowances are already indexed on the same basis. An exception is in car fuels, where duty did rise in last year's Budget. Indexing the duty since then would mean a 9 per cent increase, or 3.8p a gallon.

If the Chancellor relies heavily on the indexation arithmetic, spirits look the most vulnerable commodity, though steep rises would probably depress volume demand. On

cigarettes, the Chancellor has not only the indexation argument but that of bolstering Government action to curb smoking, especially among the young. The Government is overruling its fiscal negotiations with the tobacco companies on further voluntary restrictions on advertising.

Increasing duties on wine presents the Chancellor with some difficulty. It looks likely that the European Court of Justice, in considering discriminatory taxing of alcoholic drinks within the EEC, will rule that Britain must make an adjustment between wine and beer duties in favour of wine. What is likely to be involved is a wine duty reduction of around 20p a bottle or a rise in beer duty of 6p a pint.

On petrol duties, the question is how far the Chancellor will be tempted to raise money this way because of the lesser effect on the retail price index. He could raise £420m by increasing petrol and diesel fuel duties at a cost of adding 0.3p per cent to the index.

But £330m from tobacco tax would add 0.4 points and another £150m from beer tax would push up the index by another 0.2 per cent.

Business Diary: Summers' is icumen in • It's a wash-out

day the six employees in Summers' Building, led by secretary Yeomans, trace their lonely and unloved, the picket lines of the Steel Corporation's works. The steelers are quite happy to let particular colleagues get the job of running fully the work's own society.

might have difficulty in ending meet, but the Summers' (formed in the employees of the old Summers steelworks) such a tight operation that actually afford to pay slightly over the odds per cent instead of 10.5 per cent at the same time as its 1,500 borrowers 4 per cent for their mortgage while everyone else under a rate of 15 per cent or more.

all good things come to an end. The future of the Summers' is tied up with the of the Shorton steelworks. BSC has been trying for years. The workforce is cut from 11,500 to 4,500 in April 1, the Summers' merge, for reasons of price with the £120m Cheshire Steel. It will keep a in the steel works and necessary mortgage rate continue for existing users for another 10 years. departure of the Summers' reduces the number of steel companies based in the area to a handful, it is doubtful whether the Service Teachers' or gas (for gas industry) will have to face some realities.



He got there first: Italian Ambassador Andrea Cagiani in the City yesterday.

How endearingly Italianate of Lamberto Mazza and Nerio Nesi, the two principals in a \$100m Eurodollar loan, to have raised in their various ways the signing ceremony in the City of London yesterday.

Mazza, the president of Industrie Zanussi (the borrower) arrived three hours late, partly because his aeroplane was late in taking off in Italy, partly because it took two hours to get from Heathrow to London on the M4 in yesterday's rain—but mostly because he tried to fly in on the morning of the signing rather than the night before and then transferred to a car instead of the tube.

He arrived too late for sign-



He got there later, but at least he got there: Lamberto Mazza (right), president of Industrie Zanussi in the City yesterday.

ing, and too late indeed to greet his principal guest at the luncheon that was supposed to follow, the Italian ambassador, HE Andrea Cagiani. The ambassador it was who greeted Mazza on the industrialist's arrival at Painters' Hall in Little Trinity Lane.

His excellency was all charm, and—in that informal way Italians have; did not seem to mind at all.

As for Nesi, chairman of Banca Nazionale del Lavoro,

whose bank led the consortium which arranged the loan, he missed both the signing and the luncheon, having failed to catch his aeroplane at all.

When the bankers' Hall, Nesi was expected any minute. I presume the signing went ahead as I did ask Banca Nazionale to call me if anybody changed their mind as the day wore on. They did not ring so I suppose the signing went ahead (in time for afternoon tea, perhaps?).

The dismay of the six brewers was increased when another small independent, McMillans of Hertford, took second prize. One big brewer, Courage, may take heart, however. Simmonds-Farson-Cisk of Malta, in which Courage has a 26.3 per cent stake, won the prize for the best international bottled lager.

● A Nottingham lace machine maker reckons it is being strangled by the Turks. Spowage, Humphreys and Wyeor has been given two options of payment for a £70,000 machine they sent to Turkey last year. Either the firm accepts American dollars—but only on condition that it is in investments over 10 years—the first coming only after four years—or in even dodgier Turkish lire.

If Spowage accepts the second option the cash will be paid directly into the Central Bank of Turkey and the firm will have to spend the money in the country.

On top of this the bankrupt Turks say that if either option is not accepted by April 23 the debt will be considered settled—in other words cancelled. "We have been doing business for 10 years with Turkey but never known anything like this," says Sydney Watts, a director. Turgut Ozal, the Turkish undersecretary for planning and chief economic adviser to the Prime Minister, Suleyman Demirel has been in London recently trying to persuade private creditors to accept similar deals for £1,800m-worth of unguaranteed imports. This did not go down well in London then and obviously is not doing any better in Nottingham now.

Good to see BL's success with its "Buy British" campaign. So many British were sold last month (6,000) that, according to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, one-third had to be imported from Belgium.

Ross Davies

Metal Closures Group

METAL AND PLASTIC PRODUCTS FOR PACKAGING

Preliminary Announcement of Results Year to 31st December 1979

The considerable loss of profits caused by the effects of the national engineering strike has, to a large extent, been offset by the exemplary results from overseas.

A marked fall-off in customer orders, in some areas, is now evident, although there has been no recent loss of business to competition, and this, therefore, could be an indicator of a general downturn in demand.

At the moment, there are too many variables, both nationally and internationally, to enable any meaningful forecasts to be made. It is evident that 1980 will be an extremely difficult year for all industry but I believe we shall acquire ourselves well despite the difficulties.

	1979 £000's	1978 £000's
Sales	62,344	54,481
Profit before Tax	5,810	5,812
Profit after Tax and Minority Interests	4,112	3,658
Earnings per Share—new basis—fully taxed	20.37p 13.41p	18.11p 13.47p
Dividends—Final Ordinary (proposed)—Interim Dividend	3.2p 2.2p	2.8052p 1.9p

The accounting policy for deferred taxation has been changed and the figures for 1978 have been re-stated accordingly.

19th March 1980

John Boden, Chairman.



Financial results for the year to 31st October 1979

	1979 £'000	1978 £'000
Turnover	11,500	17,655
Profit before Tax	1,346	1,694
Profit after Tax	733	779
Revaluation of Investments	47	771
Extraordinary item—		
Reorganisation of Associated Company	299	500
Retained Profit	110	737
Earnings per Share	12.17p	12.92p
Dividend per Share	4.6p	5.19p

- Nationalisation Compensation remains unresolved
- As a consequence Income and Redevelopment of the Group adversely affected
- Dividend reduced

DA SUBSIDIARY OF DAVID BROWN HOLDINGS LIMITED

Scottish Equitable Life Assurance Society

149th Annual General Meeting will be held on 20th March at 2.30 p.m. at the Head Office

"THE MOST SUCCESSFUL DECADE IN THE SOCIETY'S HISTORY"

Year	Annual Premium Income	Fund
1969	£ 8.3m (100)	£ 74m (100)
1974	18.5m (223)	137m (185)
1979	59.2m (713)	406m (548)

Head Office
28 St. Andrew Square, EDINBURGH EH2 1YF

London
City: Morgan House, 1 Angel Court, EC2R 7HJ
West End: 61 Brook Street, W1Y 1YE

Branches throughout the country



Scottish Equitable

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

Stock markets

Equities fade after early rally

After a long-awaited but short-lived rally at the opening, the stock market returned to its dull pattern of trading which has characterized the last couple of weeks as investors bide their time before the Budget.

With the FT Index rising 4.0 to 435.7 after the first hour's trading, share prices looked as if they would maintain the slightly firmer tendency that was apparent the night before. This was accentuated by Wall Street's recovery, led by the oil and precious metals shares, when it closed at 801.61, up 12.97 after Monday's 23.04 fall.

There was also slightly more optimism over the steel strike negotiations for the first time during the current round of talks but in the event, the equities rallied away from the exception of the oil sector, where there was some recovery from the setbacks earlier this week.

Gold shares also made some sharp gains as the bullion price once again went through the psychological barrier of \$500. The gold price was fixed in London at \$514 and stayed buoyant throughout the day.

The FT Index dropped 1.40 to 430.3 by lunchtime but finished with a rally backed by the oil at 432.0, up 0.3.

Gilt, which had started easier, gradually saw more activity throughout the day, culminating in steady business in the afternoon which left longs with gains of 1/2. Dealers

reported a move into the gilt-edged market in front of the money supply figures which are due today, although gilt has generally reflected the quieter mood that has pervaded the market ahead of the Budget.

Shorts also rose steadily throughout the day after an easier opening with no backwash reported from the American rise to 19 per cent in prime rates by Chase Manhattan and First National Bank of Chicago. Although shorts dropped 1/4 at the start, buyers once again showed interest at the lower levels and they crept back to close unchanged.

Business remained fairly slack after hours with most of the

The latest problems in the carpet industry have seen analysts busy downgrading the full year figures from Carpets Int. due out next Thursday. Estimates now range from £1.7m to £2m compared with £4m last year and follow a 51 per cent fall at the half time. The final dividend also has a question mark hanging over it as did the one in 1977. The shares yesterday recovered 1p at 21p.

changes stemming from reaction to the crop of company results produced during the day.

The leading industrial sector reported a better start than the Wall Street improvement, but dealers said there was not a lot

of trading and prices were generally untested, although there was a firm undertone in trading.

Most blue chip stocks lost a couple of pence on the day or were unchanged. Beeshaams and ICI led those with gains and were both 2p up at 119p and 364p respectively by the close, having added 4p in ICI's case earlier in the day. Unilever, Rank and Reed reversed their opening rises of a few pence and ended with Unilever at 423p, Rank at 202p and Reed at 187p, all slightly down on the overnight prices.

Dunlop was unchanged at 59p as was Pilkington at 211p. But BAT Industries managed to put on 2p to 23p.

Thomas Tilling, one of the 22 companies that produced figures yesterday, gained 3p with the news that it had boosted profits from £64.9m to £81.1m although the group is still trading 5p below last year's rights issue price.

Tube Investments, which was hit by the engineering strike, also gained the day 78p, while Armstrong Equipment's results were generally well received by the market in the light of prevailing conditions, and the shares closed 3p up at 50p.

Waring bought a 0.5 per cent stake in the furniture group on Tuesday through the market and has instructed brokers to buy as many shares as possible without rising above the 30p a share bid price.

There was a sharp recovery among the oil shares took their cue from Wall Street with BP gaining 10p to 356p, Shell adding 12p to 364p and Tricent rising by 22p to 280p in front of results today. Ultramar rose by 12p to 482p and Bursmah added 9p to 196p.

Among the secondary oil shares there was also some recovery as the sellers evident early in the week drifted away. Viking was unchanged at 1040p, as was Berkeley Exploration at 924p. Among the Australians, Weeks Petroleum gained 20p on the day after early falls after news of a Louisiana oil discovery.

Mines made a dramatic start with the boost in the gold price. Vast Reefs was particularly strong and finished at 50p from 45p, while Cons Gold

Profits of £800,000 to £900,000 were made by W. L. Parnson & Son for the year to the end of February on turnover of around £17m. Now turnover is running on course for £30m pointing to a possible £1.5m profit for the year.

Meanwhile, in spite of the 100 per cent gearing, Parnson is looking for acquisitions for cash. The shares are 41p.

added 20p to 475p, RTZ gained 25p to 565p and Rustenburg put on 25p to 215p as dealers reported a distinct rise in turnover throughout the day. Samantha and Otter of the Australian mines staged a technical recovery and both stocks rose from 62p to 76p and 78p respectively.

Among the banks, Barclays gained 2p to 415p awaiting results today and National Westminster followed suit, adding 2p to 315p. Midland gained 4p to 320p and Lloyds added 1p to 281p.

Properties followed the same trend with MEPC rising 1p to 188p, and Great Portland gaining 4p to 226p. Insurances were virtually unchanged with the exception of Commercial Union which rose by 1p to 135p.

In rubbers, Killingham Tin (Malaysia) was suspended in London and Kuala Lumpur at \$312 pending an announcement over the dividend.

Equity turnover for March 18 was £11,289m (number of bargains 17,900). The most active stocks, according to the Exchange Telegraph, were Premier Consolidated, Rio Tinto-Zinc, Bursmah, Tricent, Midland, BTR, Pilkington Brothers, Turner and Newall and ICI.

Weir passes final dividend a profits fall to £2

By Michael Prest

Strikes, poor market conditions, including inflation, high interest rates and a strong pound, caused pre-tax profits of the Weir Group, the Glasgow engineering company, to plunge from £7.6m to £2.08m last year. A loss was incurred in the second half and the final dividend was passed.

Extraordinary losses of £8.24m from the closure or pending closure of OH Steel Foundries in Sheffield, the Alcon Foundry in Gorbair, and Weir Pacific Voles in Glasgow meant that the final loss to the group for the year was £7.9m. Earnings per share fell to 1.4p from 20.6p.

Trading losses at these plants last year were £2.12m. About 1,000 jobs will go.

Mr John Young, the group's managing director, estimates that the engineering and transport strikes, along with other disruptions at the group's foundry, led to a loss of about £6m. If sterling had remained at 1978's level, profits might have been £1m more.

Despite orders in the foundry operations falling by as much as half, foundries and engineering supplies, engaged to increase turnover slightly to £55.9m. Engineering, which includes valves, pumps, and other

energy saving equipment, rose to £7.5m.

The big problem can deal in the United States category, where declined nearly £200m. No major new orders for design and construction plants. Mr Young claims the very low price bid by manufacturers. But says that there is still work from previous years business was won by exchange division of pany.

Weir is optimistic, as seas sales, pointing to progress made last year. Canadian and Indian subsidiaries, and from the energy industry.

Closures in the United States will lead the director to a "slimmer" group increasingly exploiting these strong opportunities.

But Mr Young adds that the group's strong interest in high interest rates, changes in £ from £25.3m to £4.4m will find it difficult to price competitively nationally.

Which the final passed, leaving the net of £2.66p gross, slumped 13p to 41p.

Slower growth at Dickinson Robinsol

By Philip Robinson

Cash flow problems and losses within the adhesive tapes, packaging and paper and board divisions dented the profits growth of stationary-to-office equipment group Dickinson Robinsol last year.

After reporting a 29 per cent earnings rise at the halfway stage, the group unveiled annual returns up 16 per cent yesterday to £27.7m on a turnover over from £44.7m to £50.9m. The figures, however, in line with market expectations, show that during the second half earnings rose by no more than 7 per cent.

Mr John Camm, the chairman, said that high interest rates combined with the extra cash need during the middle six months of the year resulted in interest charges almost doubling.

Cost increases through group inflated working needs — at the time there was a net cash of £2.8m — and during the year a priority. After £3m on acquisition inflow during the second half, the net cash came out at £10.5m.

Last year the group steps to restructure. Depressed demand led closures of its tag and label divisions, a Lanley with the loss jobs and closure costs.

About £1.5m was group profits by losses Merton Packaging, which chairman, fibreboard, chipboard, drums and set inons has invested at the factory will break year.

⑦ Raleigh	⑦ Silencers	⑦ Creda	⑦ Archer	⑦ British Aluminium	⑦ Matrix
⑦ Reynolds	⑦ Parkray	⑦ Metsec	⑦ Glow-Worm	⑦ Chesterfield	
⑦ Russell Hobbs	⑦ Tubes	⑦ Round Oak	⑦ Drynamels	⑦ Cox	⑦ Desford
⑦ Sunhouse	⑦ Crane Packing	⑦ Crypton	⑦ & Pollock	⑦ New World	⑦ Fords



TI strength in domestic appliances

Growth record marred by engineering strike

Industry needs support for exports

TI Chairman, Sir Brian Kellett, in a press interview yesterday warned that some parts of manufacturing industry were in a battle for survival against high interest rates and strong sterling. Manufacturing industry accounts for two-thirds of the country's exports of goods and services. It is therefore vital to our future that it should survive in sufficient health to play its part in national recovery in due course. Government could help, at least with a lifeline of reduced interest rates for manufactured exports.

Results

External sales increased by 10% to £1213.8m but trading profit declined from £89.7m to £73.5m. Interest charges in total increased from £15.1m to £23.1m largely as a result of higher interest rates.

Profit before tax at £52.2m was £27.8m lower than in 1978. The tax charge was £12.3m compared with £17.3m and earnings for the year before extraordinary items were £31.6m compared with £49.8m.

1979 was a year of disappointment,

Consolidated profit and loss account year ended 31st December 1979	1979 £m	1978 £m
External sales	1,213.8	1,106.0
Trading profit	73.5	89.7
Proportion of profits of associated companies	1.8	5.4
Interest on overdrafts and other short term borrowings, net	73.5	7.3
Profit before loan interest payable	61.8	87.8
Loan interest payable	9.6	7.8
Profit before taxation	52.2	80.0
Taxation	12.3	17.3
	39.9	62.7

Proportion of profit after taxation attributable to minority shareholders	8.3	12.9
Earnings for the year	31.6	49.8
Extraordinary items	(1.9)	(11.0)
Profit after extraordinary items	29.7	38.8
Dividends	15.1	13.8
Amount added to retained earnings	14.6	25.0
Earnings per £1 ordinary stock	33.3p	44.8p

marring the record of increased profits year by year over a long period. The results were dominated by a number of major external factors, principal among which was the engineering strike which began in August and ended in October, causing a loss of pre-tax profit approaching £20m. The results also reflect high interest rates, resurgent inflation and an appreciation of sterling which has had a material impact on export margins.

Dividends

The Board recommends a final dividend of 13p per £1 Ordinary Stock payable 13th May 1980 to Ordinary Stock holders registered on the books of the company at the close of business on 15th April 1980.

This dividend brings the total dividend for the year to 25.5p compared with 23.38p last year.

Balance Sheet and Cash Flow

There was a net cash outflow for the year of £13.8m. This increase in net borrowing results in an increase in the percentage of net borrowing to shareholders' funds from 27.6% in 1978 to 30.0% at 31st December 1979. Capital expenditure totalled £48m.

Results by Business Area	External sales	Profit before loan interest payable
Steel tube and steel	314.1	318.9
Aluminium	288.4	228.3
Specialised engineering products	343.3	223.3
Domestic appliances	208.4	175.7
Cycles and toys	157.1	158.3
Parent and other companies	2.5	1.5
	1,213.8	1,106.0
	61.8	87.8

The Annual Report will be posted to Shareholders on April 17, 1980. Further copies will be available from The Secretary, Tube Investments Limited, TI House, Five Ways, Birmingham B16 8SQ.



TI Group

reflecting a continuing policy of investing in modernisation and cost saving schemes in order to improve competitiveness.

Analysis of results by business area

Aluminium and Domestic Appliances gained significant volume growth and have rewarded the large investments in recent years to expand and modernise processes and products to best international standards. The improvement in Domestic Appliances came particularly from improved market share and good product impact. Specialised Engineering also had growth areas, including Silencers and Seals, although there was weakness in the Industrial Electrical business, which has now been sold to our partners GE of America. Steel Tube, Steel and Cycles suffered substantial loss of volume from the engineering strike.

Exports from the UK increased by 6% to £240m which, after allowing for inflation, represents a real-term decline. A reduction in exports to Africa, principally lower sales of cycles to Nigeria, accounts for a significant part of this, but on a broad front, the strength of sterling was a severe handicap to our export efforts.

Consolidated balance sheet 31st December 1979	1979 £m	1978 £m
Net assets employed	237.1	212.7
Fixed assets	2.9	1.4
Deferred revenue expenditure, net	34.1	36.1
Investments	389.9	558.5
Current assets	854.3	808.7
Deduct: current liabilities	299.9	261.5
	554.4	547.2

Financed by	1979 £m	1978 £m
Issued capital	59.3	58.7
Reserves	308.4	291.5
TI stockholders' funds	367.7	350.2
Interests of minority shareholders	59.6	64.3
Total shareholders' funds	427.3	414.5
Loans	100.5	100.4
Deferred liabilities and credits	26.6	32.3
	554.4	547.2

Strike and sterling hit Molins

Hit by the engineering strike at home and the strength of the pound overseas, pretax profits for 1979 at tobacco machinery group Molins dipped slightly from a previous £11.6m to £11.1m, on sales £5.7m higher at £11.2m.

Although the effects of the engineering strike are now behind them, the cost of the dispute is thought to have amounted to some £500,000.

The paper and packaging division, where trading profits fell from £1.4m to £800,000, was particularly hard hit and the current period is unlikely to see much improvement.

On the tobacco machinery side, trading profits were maintained at £11.7m, despite the development and introduction of new products. The order book for the current year is full and the division is running at 100 per cent capacity.

A reduction in both long-term loans and cash, net of short-term borrowings, leaves the group's gearing unchanged at around 14.5 per cent.

The current period has been maintained at 11.28p gross.

Trading difficult for Hugh Mackay

Although turnover of the Hugh Mackay carpet group rose from £8.6m to £9.5m in 1979, pretax profits fell from £550,000 to £330,000. The board explains that trading was "very difficult". The expected and normal United Kingdom retail sales volume during the autumn never materialised. But a total dividend of 5.17p gross is being paid, against 5.26p.

Mr Rowland buys 250,000 Lonrho shares

Lonrho's chief executive, Mr Rowland, "Tiny" Rowland, announced yesterday that he has bought a further 250,000 shares in his own company at an average price of 90p.

Standstill at Metal Closures

Pretax profits of the Metal Closures Group were unchanged at £5.81m in 1979. Turnover was up from £54.8m to £62.34m. Loss of profits caused by the engineering strike has to a large extent, been offset by exemplary results from overseas, the board reports. The total payment goes up from 6.83p to 7.71p gross.

A.A. Jones pays more and makes scrip issue

In spite of lower profits, machine tools group, A.A. Jones and Shipman, is lifting the dividend and making a scrip

Medminster half-year turnover doubles

Although turnover of the London-based furniture group, Medminster more than doubled to £5.09m in the half-year to December 31—compared with £2.27m last year—interest and bank charges were lower in spite of high interest rates.

Pretax profits edged forward from £96,000 to £105,000. The interim payment is lifted from 1.42p to 1.57p gross. Medminster continues to expand in all classes and types of furniture and furnishings and, in a period of high inflation, its stock is a valuable asset.

Over £6m pretax Half Engineering

Passing the £6m mark first time, Hall Eng (Holdings) reports profits up from £5.29m to £5.3m for 1979 over rose from £74,297.68m. The total rises from 7.21p to 10.

Record profits at Banro Industries

Despite disruption 1979 by the road hauls order disputes, in the oil and motor oil record pretax profits of were achieved by Banro Industries. The group's profits for 1979 are £1.07m.

Sales were up from £1.15m to £1.78m. The total dividend goes up from 3.1p to 3.4p for scrip issue. The current year has well with profits to date so far.

Higher dividend for London & Manche

Last year, London and Manche Assurance's life insurance income reached £4m. The transfer to the profit loss account from life rose by 14.9 per cent to £1.2m. The general branch loss of £26,000 before total gross dividend of £1.18m from 10.8p to 12.5p.

Business appointments

New directors for stores

Mr F. A. J. Smit and Mr K. B. Boocock have been appointed directors of Combined English Stores.

Mr Graham J. L. Hill has joined the main board of Regional Properties.

Mr Douglas McLeod has been appointed to the board of Barratt Construction as technical director. Mr Norman Bruce, the previous technical director, has been named for the new post of commercial director.

Mr S. H. Wright, a director of Lazard Brothers & Co, has been made a director of Wolstenholme Bank.

Mr Peter Collard has been appointed sales director of Fielding & Platt.

Mr J. R. Gough and Mr J. B. Sheldon have been appointed directors of Arbuthnot Insurance Services.

Mr J. W. Webb, aviation underwriter of the Andrew Weir Insurance Company, has been re-elected chairman of the Aviation Insurance Offices Association. Mr J. J. Purdus, aviation underwriter of the English and American Insurance Company, has been re-elected deputy chairman. Mr C. G. Jessup, aviation underwriter of the Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance Group, has been elected honorary secretary and treasurer in succession to Mr R. F. Dowling, group aviation underwriter of the Commercial Union Assurance Company.

AVERAGE EARNINGS

The following are the index of average earnings of employees in manufacturing and services industries, based on the Department of Employment.

	(1) Old series of average earnings (Jan 1975 = 100)	(2) New series of average earnings (Jan 1975 = 100)
1979		
Jan	344.7	125.7
Feb	350.6	141.1
Mar	389.3	148.2
Apr	383.1	144.3
May	373.2	148.0
June	368.5	152.9
July	384.5	153.3
Aug	401.3	157.1
Sept	407.2	152.1
Oct	412.2	151.1
Nov		
Dec		
1979 Jan	414.8	162.5

FINANCIAL NEWS

Shares
identical
all its slip
all 35m

Mr Prest... to reach agreement... on the... terms... is given by... the shipbuilders and... as the main reason... in pre-tax profits last... 1.35m from £1.69m... ear dividend has been... to gross from 7.75p... neth Ford, the com... vice director, says... disappointed that no... progress in agreeing... been made beyond... n paid in Treasury... the Government on... vesting date in 1977... led the nationalized... £35m.

hen, the company's... of income has been... shipbuilding... decline in profits... the company's... in world ship... the fact that orders... list fast patrol craft... in more slowly than...

less, Mr Ford argues... a decline in turn... £17.7m to £11.5m... as a percentage... have been main... earnings per share in... 12.17p against 12.92... gaily increased cover... the company's... epts from nationalis... which expansion plans...

areas fell 10p to 153p.
**Cowie and
ward
st deal**
The Sunderland... dealer, is selling 50... of its finance division... rd Trust, the hire pur... 1 leasing subsidiary of... and Bank Cowie will... £1.5m in cash, made... dividend of £790,000... balance by the repay... inter-company loans... sal is being achieved... rd Trust, subscribing... shares in a company... III be renamed Cowie... Services. Forward... is agreed to provide... backing to the new... which will be in... hire purchase, con... and leasing... announcement follows... by I. Cowie last... of Red Dragon, its... subsidiary. The per... the two deals is to... I. Cowie's borrowing... and reduce the ratio... wings to shareholders... om 203 per cent to... cent.



The current year has started satisfactorily for Union Discount, Mr Alexander Ritchie, the chairman (above, standing), told shareholders at the annual meeting yesterday.

Although he was making no

predictions for the full year, particularly ahead of the Budget, he did admit that the group was making a profit.

In 1979 Union raised net profits from a previous £1.8m

to £2.1m and lifted the dividend from 26.35p to 28.6p.

Also pictured are, sitting, left to right, Lord Remnant, deputy chairman, Mr P. L. Shepherd, company secretary, and Mr Richard Fetherbridge, director.

Petrofina earnings set to rise

Petrofina's earnings per share could be between 900 and 1,000 Belgian francs in 1980 compared with 626 francs last year, according to Banque Bruxelles Lambert.

The bank also forecast a net dividend of 270 francs this year compared with 230 francs in 1979.

In January, the company announced consolidated net profits of 8,300m francs for 1979.

Babcock under pressure

Deutsche Babcock, a leading West German maker of power generating equipment, says its earnings in the fiscal year that began on October 1, 1979, are coming under pressure from higher costs despite sharp rises in sales and order inflow.

Sales in the first five months of the fiscal year were DM1,210m (£255m), up 32.9 per cent from DM910m a year earlier.

Order inflow was DM2,740m, an increase of 45.8 per cent. In the year ended September 30, 1979, Babcock paid dividends of DM16 per DM100 nominal common share and DM17 to preferred shareholders.

Herr Hans Ewaldsen, the chairman, declared last month that he didn't expect Babcock would be able to raise its payout for the current fiscal year.

International

Higher North Sea earnings should help to offset a levelling off in European refining, marketing and petrochemical operations, which are likely to suffer from the impending economic slowdown and the impact of

energy conservation measures, the bank added.

Petrofina's petrochemical operations are also likely to face stiffer competition from North America, where products benefit from cheaper feedstocks.

The bank said American Petrofina may suffer severely from a recession in the petrochemical industry while Petrofina Canada could be badly affected by the rise in domestic oil prices.

Hudson's Bay upturn
Hudson's Bay Company announced yesterday that earnings per ordinary share before extraordinary items were £2.98 for 1979, the year ended January 31, 1980, as against £2.74 for 1978.

Earnings were £580.3m, up from £544.6m the year before. Sales and revenue were £31,400m, compared with £31,900m in 1978. Extraordinary gains of £523.2m, attributable to the partial exchange of 6 per cent exchangeable debentures for shares of Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas, were also recorded.

Elf-Aquitaine
Société Nationale Elf-Aquitaine, the parent company of the state-controlled oil group, recorded a net profit of 2,296m francs last year, up from 900m in 1978, the company said. It paid a net dividend of 35 francs a share, up from 18 francs in 1978.

Briefly

F. Pratt Engineering: The chairman told the AGM that the current year had started with a good order book and, with the actions taken to counter the worst effects of the steel strike, the first half-year should reflect the improvement in the second half of last year.

John I. Jacobs: Turnover for 1979, £1,77m (£1,111m). Pretax profit, £1,33m (£808,000). Gross dividend, 3p (2.53p).

Trafford Park Estates: Turnover for half-year to December 31 rose from £1,62m to £2,07m. Pretax profit, up from £547,000 to £705,000. Interim dividend, gross, raised from 2.5p to 3.21p.

House of Leazes: Sales for 1979 £17,07m (£16,23m). Pretax profit, £1,41m (£1,2m). Total dividend, 7.51p (6.53p) gross.

Manor National Group Motors: Pretax profit for 1979, £1,22m (£1,11m for previous period). Turnover, £43,85m (£47,17m). Total gross dividend, 3.57p (3.06p).

The Electrical and Industrial Investment Co.: Income for 1979, £1,050 (£771,000). Earnings per £1 of deferred ordinary stock, 751p, compared with 550p in 1978. Total dividend, 65p (47p).

J. J. Leavelle (Holdings): The group had finished 1979 in fine style with record profits and a strong balance sheet. Chairman Sir Peter Trench said at the annual meeting in London of Y. J. Leavelle (Holdings), the builders, developers and property investors, he remained hopeful that 1980 would prove a satisfactory year.

Electric & General Investment: Gross income for nine months to February 29, £807,000 (£665,000). Chief Dir's rights issue of 1,01m ordinary shares, £300 a share, attracted acceptances for 808,272 shares (79.4 per cent of issue). Baring Bros reported.

Capel-Cure Myers and McAnally: Capel-Cure Myers (Provinces), a subsidiary of Capel-Cure Myers, and the branch office of Capel-Cure Myers (Scotland) in Glasgow, BNP Group has acquired Bank of the West, a California bank with assets of £50m. Bank of the West has been merged with BNP's subsidiary, French Bank of California.

Norfolk Capital Group: is to sell two hotels for £2.7m cash to private buyers. Total book value of assets being disposed of is £2.55m.

Paucimont Mining: Unaudited consolidated loss \$452,658 (loss \$A165,851) for half-year ended December 31, -Reuter.

Hampson Industries: sales rose from £5.7m to £7.3m in the half-year to September 30. Pretax profits rose from £274,000 to £321,000. Interim payment, 0.39p gross (0.37p, adjusted, last time).

Union Corp-General Mining: Formal completion of the merger of Union Corp with General Mining and Finance now only requires approval of the Supreme Court, following shareholder approval at meetings. General Mining said in Johannesburg. -Reuter.

London Broadcasting: which operates LBC and IRN, made a profit on its trading operations in 1978 of £22,000, an increase of 62 per cent. Company has repaid all outstanding loan stock and has reduced its losses to £1.4m by the end of last September.

IMI

BUILDING PRODUCTS/HEAT EXCHANGE/FLUID POWER/GENERAL ENGINEERING/ZIP FASTENERS/REFINED & WROUGHT METALS

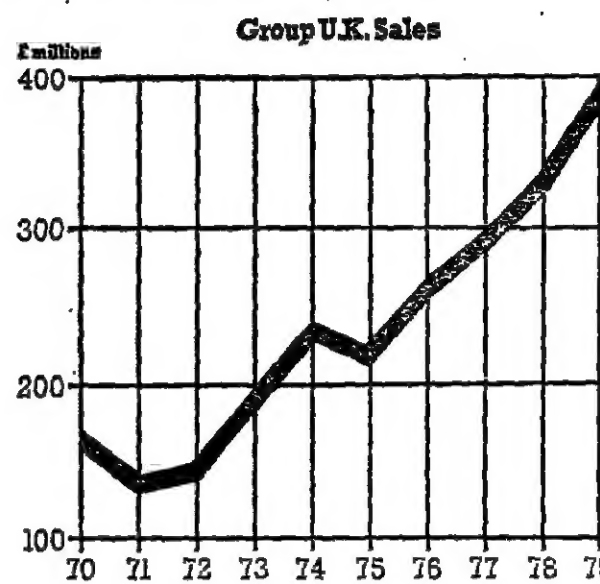
1979 sales, exports and profits reach new high levels

The Chairman, Sir Michael Clapham, says:

"In 1979, IMI's sales of \$612 million, exports of £113 million, and pre-tax profits under the historical cost convention of £34.5 million exceeded our 1978 figures by 17, 14 and 8 per cent respectively. In £s of the year terms, they were all higher than in any previous year.

"I am glad to be able to report this to shareholders in view of the impact on the Company of high interest rates, national industrial disputes and the strengthening of sterling against other currencies, and after our disappointing first half-year.

"The cash generated by our operations during the year, £49 million, fell short of our requirements, including investment, taxation, dividend payments and financing the effect of inflation on our working capital, by only £4 million, which was covered by short term borrowings. These of course remain small in relation to the facilities available to us, and our reserves rose by



£20 million during the year to bring our total capital and reserves to £220 million.

"Our investment in fixed assets during the year was £25 million, compared with a depreciation provision of £11 million. Adjustment for inflation would add approximately £9 million to this depreciation figure, so in reality our capital investment this year has done rather more than sustain the value of our assets. Working capital rose by £7 million."

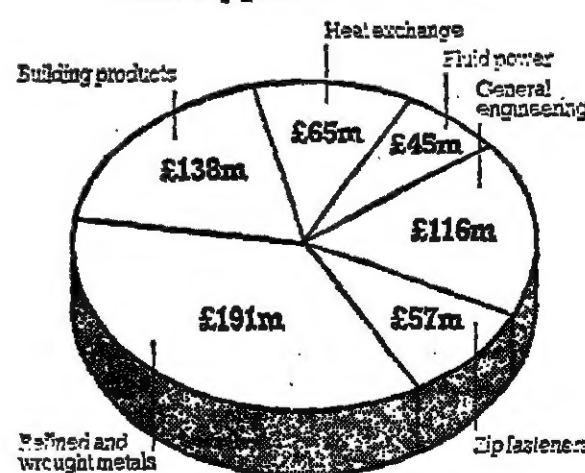
Summary of Results

	1979 £000	1978 £000
Sales to external customers	611,977	524,006
Group profit before taxation	34,536	32,010
Earnings applicable to shareholders	29,366	24,684
Total assets	281,499	268,626

Earnings per share (excluding extraordinary items)	15.7p	13.9p
Dividends per share	4.4p	3.67855p

Sir Michael adds:
"In general, and sometimes in very difficult circumstances, industrial relations have been good, and employees have shown a realistic understanding of the Company's need to deliver good quality products on time and at competitive costs. Much hard and constructive work goes into making and selling products having a total value of over £600 million, and I am grateful to all who have played their part. I pay particular tribute to those

Sales by product areas 1979



who have contributed, whether in design, production, selling or distribution, to the virtual doubling of our export realisations over the last four years."

The Annual Report has a comprehensive survey of IMI's activities. Send for a copy to the Secretary, IMI Limited, PO Box 216, Birmingham B6 7BA.

IMI

means more than metal

Armstrong outlook brightens

Financial Staff... the suspension and... industrial group, looks set... from the profits... last couple of years... no small feat given the... of the engineering and... industries.

profits in the six... to December show... marginal improvement... £2.7m to £4.31m. But... of the engineering... which cost the group... £1.5m, and the usual... factory, almost all the... in the second... For the second half,

the steel strike casts a shadow, but apart from its two recent acquisitions whose stock levels were inadequate, Armstrong is coping reasonably well with supply shortages.

Given a fair wind and the absence of any other damaging strikes the group should push profits up from £8.76m to perhaps £10m after about £300,000 of redundancy costs.

The fully taxed p/e ratio at 50p, up 5p on the results, would then be around 6, while the yield, if the 14 per cent interim rise to 1.44p a share gross is followed with the final, would be 8 1/2 per cent.

Acquisitions are continuing to provide much of the driving force with Cornetco, for example, likely to double its contribution to £800,000 for the year while Anglo-Swiss has also moved into the black.

France is still proving difficult, but South Africa is on course for sharply higher profits and Spain goes from strength to strength.

Meanwhile the switch away from original equipment, now only a fifth of sales, to the after-market is providing more stability while gearing of around 22 per cent provides scope for further acquisitions.

Options

The tension of waiting to see whether the Chancellor will alter the ruling on capital gains tax and stamp duty appears to be having an adverse effect on traded options. Total bargains slipped from 597 to only 292 as dealers reported very little turnover with activity spread across the board. Rascal experienced some interest along with the two mining finance houses RTZ and Cons Gold.

Traditional options also had a quieter time ahead of declaration day today although dealers reported some interest in some of "Aussie" issues. These included names such as Cairn Boyd, ACM and North Kalguri.

J LOVELL (HOLDINGS) LTD

IN GROUP ACTIVITIES: Building, Residential and Commercial Developments, Plant Hire, Importers and Merchants.

Another Record Year

UNPARALLELED RESULTS

	1979 £000	1978 £000
Group Turnover	105,038	82,670
Profit before Taxation	2,615	1,929
Profit after Taxation	2,565	1,724
Profit attributable to Shareholders	2,238	1,724
Ordinary Dividend 5.75p per share (1978 - 4.35p)	395	299
Earnings per Ordinary Share	37.1p	24.9p

Extract from Address to Shareholders by Sir Peter Trench

The Group finished 1979 in fine style with record profits and a strong balance sheet, and to repeat the performance in 1980.

The picture in the market place is not currently, however, a happy one with high interest rates and demand for construction services continuing to fall. The delayed settlement of the steel strike will also add to building costs long after the stoppage is forgotten. Nevertheless, we still believe that there will be good opportunities available for a Group such as ours and we have every intention of taking them. We remain hopeful that 1980 will not be an unsatisfactory one for the Lovell Group.

Lovell

